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LAY THOUGHTS OF A DEAN

MORE LAY THOUGHTS OF A DEAN

A RUSTIC MORALIST

OUR PRESENT DISCONTENTS

BY

WILLIAM RALPH INGE

FORMERLY DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S

Author of *Lay Thoughts of a Dean*,
More Lay Thoughts of a Dean, *A*
Rustic Moralist, etc.

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN my last little book of fugitive essays was published two years ago with the kind permission of the *Evening Standard*, under the title of *A Rustic Moralist*, I did not guess that I might still be writing weekly causeries or sermonettes in 1938, nor that I might be asked to give some of them a more permanent form. The *Rustic Moralist* was very kindly received, and it is not for me to say that if my public are not tired of me, they ought to be. I am not really sorry that I still have readers, for I have come to regard these weekly articles as my pulpit, now that I preach very seldom, and I have put into them my strongest convictions, in the popular style which I supposed to be suitable to this kind of writing. My editors have been most kind in giving me a free hand. There was only one subject on which I could hardly let myself go—the horrors of the Red revolution in Spain. On this I shall say something in this Introduction, for the British public have been shamefully deceived.

These are very anxious and troubled times. In the days when the guttersnipes of Fleet Street were pelting me with mud as a pessimist, I never dreamed of anything so terrible and so menacing as the state of Europe to-day. Tyrannies worse because more ubiquitous and pervasive than those of Nero or Ivan the Terrible; freedom of action, of speech, and

even of thought crushed and stifled; cruelties such as no civilized nation has practised for centuries; revolutions aiming at the extermination of whole classes of the population; treaties shamelessly repudiated; reasons of State openly set above any distinction of right and wrong; the religion which has enshrined and guarded the highest aspirations of men and women for nearly two thousand years insulted, persecuted, and rejected; war justified and extolled as a noble thing. In the opinion of most thinkers on the Continent, and of many at home, we are on the brink of an abyss which may plunge us into a dark age such as followed the break-up of the ancient civilization.

There is, however, one important difference between the fifth century and the twentieth. When the West Roman Empire fell to pieces, there was no civilized State left in the world except the feeble Byzantine dominion, and China, which had no influence upon the West. At the present time, terrible though a "downfall of the West" would be, it would not destroy the traditions on which civilization rests, and which would ensure its recovery. The New World has its own problems, but it is not in danger of ruin, either by foreign conquest or by internal revolution. This is true of our own Dominions, as well as of the United States and South America. Modern civilization cannot be swept away, whatever the consequences of suicidal folly in its original seats.

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Most of these short articles are the result of reflection on our present discontents. We may at least congratulate ourselves that the mood of self-complacency and cheerful optimism which made the reign of Queen Victoria so agreeable a time to live in is no longer possible. We know that we are sick, and we are searching anxiously for a diagnosis and a remedy. To describe the symptoms may or may not be a help towards locating the seat of the malady and suggesting remedial measures; the problems are far too complex to be solved by any simple formula.

St. Augustine's epigram that *boni vel mali mores* are merely *boni vel mali amores* of course goes to the root of the matter. Wrong standards of value are the cause of all our troubles. But since we cannot cure "original sin, the corruption of man's heart," we have to inquire why particular distortions of right judgment are prevalent at particular times. There is no reason to think that human nature is becoming worse, though we must not, like the prophets of the nineteenth century, suppose that it is necessarily and inevitably becoming better.

Our first question, it seems to me, must be whether the present unrest of Europe is the result of the violent jolt which it received in the Great War, or whether civilization is in a state of unstable equilibrium from which it can recover only by drastic readjustments. The effects of the temporary dislocation of social life by four years of internecine

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struggle are often underestimated in this country, because we escaped a *culbute générale*, and re-established our social order with rather astonishing success. The troubles which followed the Napoleonic War caused great alarm a hundred years ago, but they were followed by two generations of abounding prosperity and relative contentment. On the other hand, the ruin of Germany in the Thirty Years War is a warning that "those wounds heal ill that men do give themselves."

The French Revolution, and the wars which followed it, placed the middle class in power in France and England, and ultimately in other progressive countries. Are we now witnessing the destruction of this class, and of the Liberalism which is their political philosophy, and the emergence of a new type of civilization? Are our troubles due to the dying struggles of the old order, soon to be ended by the triumph of the new?

Universal suffrage would hardly have been accepted with so little opposition but for the sentimental idealism of Rousseau and his followers. That the ballot-box is a Urim and Thummim for eliciting political wisdom and the will of God is a superstition which is still vocal in America, at least on platforms, but is increasingly hard to believe. Democracy has been instrumental in breaking down privilege and promoting equality of consideration; it has remedied many abuses, and has taught the masses self-respect and a measure of political

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wisdom. These are no small benefits. But it is a weak form of government ; it fails in presence of a resolute faction which acknowledges no community of interest and loyalty with the rest of the nation. It is so far from choosing its rulers well that in every real democracy the politician is distrusted and despised. This is notably true of France.

The natural outcome of universal suffrage is, as Plato foresaw, to turn politics into competitive mass bribery, as long as there are any rich men to be fleeced. This tendency was long held in check by a variety of causes, which need not be enumerated here ; America is only now ceasing to be a rich man's paradise. But in England, above all other countries, the wage-earner is now a privileged person, exempt from taxation and parasitic upon the owners of property. Even so fundamentally sound a population as ours is beginning to be demoralized.

Democracy is generally a safeguard against violent revolution. Revolutions normally begin with a peasants' revolt, a *jacquerie*, due to the breakdown of the feudal system. The feudal system began at the time of the decay of the West Roman Empire. The towns fell into decay, and their inhabitants were ruined by taxation ; but the great landowners, who lived on their crops and on the labour of their slaves, were not easy to tax, and crowds of refugees from the towns fled to them for protection. So began a system which lasted for some fifteen hundred years. In the Middle Ages the baron discharged an

important function, and continued to do so in England, where the aristocracy, with all their faults, retained great power and did not use it badly. Peasant revolts in England have not been serious.

But under the powerful monarchies of the Continent things were different. Neither the Kings of France nor the Tsars of Russia chose their chief ministers from the aristocracy, but from the middle class. This gave them a larger choice, and some of them, like Louis XIV, were very well served. But the territorial magnates had retained their privileges and lost their powers. They were a useless and demoralized class. At last their tenants or serfs rose against them, burnt their castles, and seized the land for themselves. This is the regular beginning of a revolution, and if the peasants could have their way it would be the end of it. But now comes the chance of a fanatical minority in the towns, aided by the submen and criminals who in normal times are repressed. These revolutionary gangs always find leaders, not of their own class—some Robespierre or Lenin—who seize the Government, paralysed by civic disorder, and institute a reign of terror, committing frightful atrocities. This state of things may continue for many years; for though the terrorists usually end by slaughtering each other, as in France in 1794 and in Russia in 1937, this does not bring the terror to an end. The most likely sequel of the bloodbath is perhaps for the army, under some

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capable general, to take control. This at least is what happened in France, and is likely to happen in Spain.

These examples illustrate Bernard Shaw's dictum, that no good government has yet been discovered. Lecky thought that England was best governed between the first Reform Bill in 1832 and the second in 1867. This was a transitional period, combining some of the advantages of aristocracy and of democracy. Plato and Aristotle might have agreed with Lecky. But it could not last. The flowing tide was then in the direction of complete democracy, and few men who valued their reputation as progressive thinkers would have ventured to suggest that the tide might turn. It was in vain that von Sybel declared that universal suffrage would ring the knell of popular government.

The long duel between the crown and the nobles was decided in our country in favour of the gentry, on the Continent in favour of the crown. Our nobles almost exterminated each other in the Wars of the Roses, but the Tudors, though they had much power, depended on the good will of their subjects. They had no standing army and no secret police. The post-renaissance monarchy on the Continent was a new thing in Europe.

Of other experiments the most extraordinary was the Turkish sultanate, in which the ministers of State were slaves. They were recruited by a tribute of young boys, who after beginning their career as

minions were drafted, some into the household troops and others into the civil service. One of them might rise to be Grand Vizier, but he remained a slave. At the pout of a girl in the Sultan's harem a black eunuch might be sent from the palace with the fatal bowstring, and the all-powerful minister submitted quietly to be strangled. This system ends in what has been called praetorianism; the imperial bodyguard makes and unmakes puppet emperors. At last the arrogant guards are treacherously massacred by the autocrat, the Janissaries in Turkey, the Mamelukes in Egypt.

The mention of Spain tempts me to a digression for which I cannot apologize, for there has been a campaign of shameless misrepresentation which has smirched the honour of our country, and has cost the lives of scores of misguided young men who have volunteered to fight on the wrong side.

The first falsehood, which one hears everywhere repeated, is that the Valencia Government is "the lawfully elected Government of Spain." This is untrue. In spite of every kind of fraud and intimidation, including the destruction of voting urns, the Frente Popular scored only 4,356,000 votes against 4,910,000 for the Right and Centre. By fraudulent means 256 candidates were declared elected for the Left, and only 217 for the Right, of whom 40 were not allowed to take their seats.¹

¹ *The Tragedy of Spain*, by Dr. van Vollenhoven, Ambassador of Holland to Madrid, p. 27.

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Within two months after the establishment of the so-called Republican Government, Professor Alison Peers wrote: "The Government is incapable of safeguarding the rights of any group of persons whatever." A Government of which this can be said is no Government. Between the elections and the military rising, says van Vollenhoven, 84 churches were burnt, 956 persons were murdered; 100,000 had their goods confiscated, and Calvo Sotelo, a former minister of State, was assassinated by men in uniform.

The "Government" soon after released and armed the inmates of the prisons, and turned them loose to murder and pillage. In Madrid alone 100,000 persons,¹ "one-tenth of the population,"² were butchered. In the whole of Spain the estimates of the number of murders vary from 300,000 to 600,000. By February 1937 16,750 clerics and members of religious orders had been put to death. In nine dioceses not a church remained standing; "about 20,000 churches have been destroyed."³

These massacres were accompanied by the most horrible tortures,⁴ so sickening that I will not describe them. As for the treatment of women, one example will suffice. At San Martin de Valdei-

¹ Van Vollenhoven, p. 33.

² Foss and Gerahty, *The Spanish Arena*, p. 254.

³ Letter signed by forty-three Spanish bishops.

⁴ See the thoroughly documented Reports issued by the National Government, published in English by Eyre and Spottiswoode; and G. M. Godden's *Conflict in Spain*.

glesias, "each woman was condemned to be violated and to satiate every vile passion of twenty-five ruffians each. They implored their executioners a thousand times to kill them. . . . Many of their young children witnessed the dishonour of their mothers."¹

Did our newspapers, and did our public men, say anything about these horrors? No; they went into hysterics about the bombing of Guernica, and an entirely fictitious massacre at Badajoz. I have never known such an orgy of lying and suppression of the truth. And it has been successful. The man in the street says, "The Spaniards are a cruel people. The atrocities have been about equal on both sides."

Non-intervention has been a cynical hypocrisy. Last February Franco had nearly fifteen thousand foreign prisoners in his camps. The number now is of course far greater. In August 1938 the Burgos Government announced, "Foreign war material captured from the Reds: *Russian*: 84 tanks, 275 trench-mortars and bomb-throwers; 577 machine guns, 561 light machine guns, 60,000,000 cartridges. *French*: 24 tanks, 85 guns, 112 machine guns, 465 light machine guns, 25,000,000 cartridges. *British*: 4 guns, 47 machine guns, 410 light machine guns, 9,000,000 cartridges."

Russian propaganda has been at work for several years. "Viva Rusia" is the war-cry of the Reds, as

¹ *Communist Activities in Spain*, Second and Third Reports, by Arthur Bryant.

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“Arriba Espana” is of the Nationalists. An official of the Valencia Government said to an Englishman, “We armed fury and it has erupted in the streets. From that moment no central Government existed or was meant to exist. The city (Madrid) was in the hands of the Red mob, and the Chekas (note the sinister Russian word) got to work.”¹

It is a foul and horrible story. An old man like myself can well remember the wave of fiery indignation which surged through the nation over the “Bulgarian atrocities,” in which some twelve thousand persons were cruelly put to death by Turkish irregulars. Is there no regard for humanity in the rump of the once powerful Liberal party? Are even the Socialists lost to all sense of decency? There was a time when wanton cruelty roused indignation in every Englishman. But we, it appears, are afraid of offending France, which is seething with Communism, and possibly have an understanding with the homicidal maniac who terrorises Russia. Our pacifists of the Left may be divided into those who want to fight Germany, those who want to fight Japan, those who want to fight Italy, and those who want to fight all three.

Liberavi animam! It should be recognized that these horrors are not peculiar to Spain, but have been part of the deliberate policy of Communism wherever it has temporarily got a foothold. The exploits of Bela Kun in Hungary, and of the Reds when

¹ Foss and Gerahty, p. 256.

they gained control of Riga, should be known. It is important to realize this, because without this the rise of the dictatorships in Italy and Germany is quite inexplicable. But before passing on to Germany and Italy, there are features in these epidemics of blood-lust which call for consideration.

Lenin realized that Spain was the country in which his dragon's teeth might be sown most profitably. Russia and Spain resembled each other in having escaped the industrial revolution. Both countries were economically backward; the middle class was weak. In many parts of Spain the peasants were desperately poor, and the *grandees*, as I was told by a lady who had stayed in their houses, seemed to have very little sympathy with their sufferings. This would account for a peasants' revolt, which my friend thought must be imminent. It would not account for what happened at Madrid and Barcelona and in almost every other town in Red Spain.

Can we imagine the populace of an English town suddenly falling upon their inoffensive neighbours, with whom they had lived on friendly nodding terms? Can we imagine them dragging from their beds the mayor, the vicar, the Free-Church minister, the doctor, the solicitor, the schoolmaster, the bank-cashier, the butcher and baker, beating them to death with clubs, tearing out their eyes, mutilating them, burning them alive, outraging their wives and daughters? These things were done

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in many parts of Red Spain; they only ceased when, as one of the criminals boasted, "all our class-enemies are dead." The fury was directed not so much against the rich as against the industrious and non-political middle class. These have been the chief victims of Communism everywhere. When the late Admiral Fisher visited the Port of Barcelona with his ship, the British Consul paid him an official call, dressed like a working man. "You must excuse my odd costume," he said to the Admiral; "if I appeared in the streets wearing a collar and tie, I should be murdered."

It would, I suppose, be unscientific to talk of Antichrist. Psychologists would prefer to speak of a contagious psychical epidemic, leading to an orgy of senseless cruelty. There is an able study of the character of a revolutionary *enragé* in Anatole France's *Les Dieux ont Soif*. But I am inclined to believe in diabolical possession. As a judge instructed a jury to find a verdict of "died by act of God" if no *rational* cause of death could be discovered, so I think we may ascribe to "act of the devil" deeds which seem to pass the limits of merely human depravity.

It is well known that special vindictiveness has been shown against the Church, both in Russia and in Spain. Some have found an explanation in the abuses of the Church in both countries, the unnecessary multiplication of idle monks and nuns, the ignorance and moral irregularities of the parish

priests, the wealth of the higher ecclesiastics, and the support given by the Church to political obstruction, especially in resisting reforms in secular education. Much of this indictment is probably true, but the great wealth of the bishops is a thing of the past. The novel of Blasco Ibanez about Toledo, translated under the title of *The Shadow of a Cathedral*, gives a true picture, from a Liberal standpoint, of a Spanish Cathedral town thirty or forty years ago.

But the fury of the Communists is not directed against corruptions of religion, but against religion itself. Their own writings leave no doubt about this. They would prefer a corrupt Church, as being easier to destroy. They hate Christianity not because they do not understand it, but because they do. They hate it because it is a religion of love, whereas theirs is a religion of hatred. The two religions, as they see clearly, cannot exist together. The number of martyrs in Russia and Spain is already far greater than that of the victims of persecution under the Roman Empire.

I said that we cannot even begin to understand the dictatorships in Central Europe unless we recognize the terror caused by the Communist menace. We often hear that this was a scare propagated by Mussolini and Hitler in their own interests. There were not, we are told, very many Communists either in Germany or Italy, and the danger of social revolution was past before the dictators were in the

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saddle. This is a question which can never be answered with certainty, but it does not at all follow that because the Communists were in a small minority, they had no chance of success. Every revolution is made by a small minority. Lenin, in one of his queer bursts of candour, said that in any group of fifty of his supporters there was only one Communist; the rest were fools or criminals. In any case, there is not the slightest doubt that those who supported the dictators believed the danger to be real; and they knew, better than most Englishmen, the horrors of a Communist régime.

Marx, among many other flagrant errors, entirely failed to predict the steady increase in the numbers and power of the small bourgeoisie. He thought that until the general overturn took place, the gulf between the rich and the poor would grow wider; the rich would grow richer, the poor poorer. The opposite has happened, largely through the social legislation which for that reason Communists bitterly oppose. The "little man," as they call him in Germany, is now able to defend himself, and he realizes that he must defend himself, since the Communists wish to exterminate him root and branch. It was the little man, conscripted in the Great War and trained in the use of arms, who put Mussolini and Hitler in power.

This, however, is far from being a complete explanation of the rise of these dictatorships. Both Italy and Germany felt themselves wronged and humili-

ated after the war. Italy, in accordance with her principle of *sacro egoismo*, drove a very hard bargain with the Allies as the price of joining them. Germany had promised the Italians Corsica and Tunis—a very substantial bribe; but Germany might not be able to deliver the goods, and it was impossible to include in the bribe a large slice of Austrian territory, which is what the Italians chiefly wanted. So they closed with the lavish promises of England and France, promises reluctantly given and not strictly observed after the armistice. The Italians were very angry. They had not only been cheated, as they thought; their achievements in the war were belittled. In this they were right; the treachery of Caporetto obscured the fact that the Italians fought well on the whole; their losses in killed were two-thirds of our own.

Mussolini, who had begun as a revolutionary, was deeply impressed by the force of patriotic sentiment, and resolved to win power as an ardent and aggressive nationalist. He is not, I think, a man of deep convictions, but a *condottiere* of genius like Napoleon and several other Italians. He has had a longer reign than Napoleon, and except as a general may rank in history as his equal. His handling of domestic problems has been masterly. Unfortunately he thought it necessary to win a spectacular success as an empire-builder, to satisfy the wounded *amour-propre* of his countrymen. The rape of Abyssinia was a peculiarly cynical act of international perfidy.

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Italian politicians have never been scrupulous. Cavour said once, "If we had done for ourselves what we are doing for Italy, what scoundrels we should be!" But the unification of Italy was a worthy aim which might excuse some chicanery; the conquest of an ancient and helpless kingdom in Africa, in defiance of pledges given to the League of Nations, was a very different affair. It nearly led to war with England; and the Italians are still quite unable to realize that our indignation with their Government was purely idealistic, not prompted by any fear that our own interests might suffer. There are no doubt some Englishmen who think that Mussolini wishes to make the Mediterranean an Italian lake, and to establish himself in the Balearic Isles, if not in Spain. Such a wild-cat scheme would involve him in war with France as well as England, and could not possibly succeed. Mussolini is probably too long-headed to dream of anything of the kind, in spite of his flamboyant jingoism. Nevertheless, our diplomatic defeat over "sanctions" was one motive for our colossal expenditure on armaments, a very grievous abandonment of the policy by which we hoped to set an example to Europe, and the most ruinous of all ways of producing an illusion of prosperity.

The German dictatorship is much more recent than the Italian, but it had its rise in the same two causes—bitter national discouragement and deadly fear of Communism. During the war I asked Lord

Haldane what was the truth about German war-guilt. He replied, "The guilt of the Germans consists in this, that they drove Russia into a position from which no peaceable escape was possible. This they ought to have known." But evidence has accumulated that even in 1913 the Army chiefs had dominated the Emperor and his Chancellor. The Army chiefs knew what they were doing; they willed the war. It had to come, they thought; and the best time was after the widening of the Kiel Canal, and before the completion of the Russian strategic railways. Certain documents published by the Bolsheviki show that some politicians in Russia were contemplating the probability of war, "only not before 1916."

These preventive wars, advised on plausible grounds by the military, may nullify the will to peace of whole nations. I believe that at present the German general staff is not in favour of war, certainly not with either France or England. The invectives in which Germans and Russians indulge against each other should not blind us to the fact that the two Governments are essentially of the same kind, and are getting more alike every year. Marxism in Russia is dead, except for export. A new bourgeoisie is springing up. International revolution is no longer seriously aimed at; the idealists of Bolshevism have disappeared in successive purges. So far from the State "withering away"—a favourite phrase of Marx, there has never

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been a more ruthless autocracy than that of Stalin. On the other side, National Socialism is a real Socialism, though the British Labour Party is too prejudiced to realize it. There is not much to prevent a good understanding and even an alliance between Germany and Russia; the German military chiefs are well aware of this. A war between the two countries would be a foolish blunder. I dare not prophesy; but I am inclined to think that within ten years we shall see an important re-grouping of the Great Powers in the way which I have suggested.

“The rise of Hitlerism was the measure of Germany’s disillusionment. The people had been broken in body and mind by suffering—four years of war; starvation and the blockade; the collapse of their ideals; humiliation on humiliation; reparations; the loss of their colonies and ten million Germans torn from the living body of the Reich; and the wandering of the people along a path without hope and without faith.”¹ France was in a vindictive mood at Versailles, and in our own country there was an angry wish to punish the aggressors. The Germans would have got better terms if the treaty of Brest-Litovsk had not shown the world how little mercy would have been granted after a German victory. But a more generous settlement would have given the republican Weimar Government a better chance.

Democracy was doomed to fail in Germany, as

¹ S. H. Roberts, *The House That Hitler Built*, p. 35.

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the Kerensky Government failed in Russia. It was contrary to the traditions and habits of the people, who were more inclined to accept the opposite theory, enunciated with brutal directness by General Goering. "The laws of nature demand that authority should be exercised from above downwards and responsibility from below upwards. Each leader has authority and issues his orders to officials and followers below him. But he is responsible only to his superiors, and the leader at the top is responsible to the people as a whole."¹ Very fine! but if the leader at the top is incapable of leading?

The Germans, however, found a leader whom they were willing to follow, the "naïve and reckless"² Adolf Hitler, whom they worship with the same uncritical devotion that the Russians pay to the memory of the saturnine Lenin. Under the spell of this devotion Germany has been reborn. The ideals of patriotism, duty, and discipline have changed a discouraged mob into a most formidable unitary State. The achievements in internal organization have been very remarkable, all the more so because the credit seems to belong rather to the people than to their rulers. Hitler may have a magnetic personality, but his dictatorship hitherto has been a catalogue of crimes and blunders.

The clumsily staged burning of the Reichstag, which few believe to have been the work of Com-

¹ *Germany Reborn*, p. 37, 38.

² H. A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe*, p. 1204.

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munists, was followed by the hideous massacre of June 30, 1934, when some two hundred (the number is uncertain) suspected persons were butchered without any form of trial. The victims included a former Chancellor and his wife, and Roehm, Hitler's oldest friend and helper, whose memory was smirched by his murderer. A wise ruler is above all things careful not to quarrel with organized religion, for Churchmen will choose martyrdom rather than apostasy. But Hitler has antagonized both Catholics and Protestants. The persecution of the Jews is impolitic, since international Jewry has its own methods of hitting back, and morally it is detestable. Since the expulsion of the Huguenots by Louis XIV, no proscription so extensive, so cruel, and so foolish has been organized by any civilized country. Like the French under Louis XIV, the Germans have driven out some of the best brains in their country, and they have made the name of Germany stink in the nostrils of all decent people. In the newly annexed land of Austria the persecution has been peculiarly abominable; the suicides of these unhappy people run into four figures. These atrocities are justified by an insane theory of racial superiority, preached before the war by the renegade Englishman, Houston Chamberlain, and eagerly adopted by the Nazi party. The Nordic "Aryans," it seems, are the supermen; contrary to the usual opinion, they include Jesus Christ, Dante, and Leonardo da Vinci. It is

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enough to say that this political ethnology is treated with derision by all genuine students of anthropology.

Lastly, all effective opposition and even criticism of the Government is prevented by universal delation and terrorism. The German Gestapo—the secret police—is as ruthless as the Cheka or Ogpu in Russia.

As for the human side of the new dictatorships, we cannot but agree with Voigt.¹ “Throughout all Marxian and National Socialist literature there is not a trace of pity, magnanimity, forgiveness, or of any generous feeling, not one word of respect for honour or for righteousness—not one trace of toleration, not the slightest appreciation for a foe who might be brave, or even right in his own way.”

“The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” War and revolution can produce only their own fruits—more violence, more savagery, more injustice, and no exorcism of evil spirits. What will be the outcome of the troubles of Europe I do not know; but two things seem to be necessary if there is to be any recovery—the removal of the fear of violent revolution, and the subordination of nationalism to loyalty towards the whole comity of civilized humanity. It is not much to ask, that Europe shall return to sanity; but it means the renunciation of civil war and of international war. As for the poor League of Nations, we began with faith, we went on with hope, and now there is

¹ *Unto Caesar*, p. 79.

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nothing left but charity. But it may come to life again under happier auspices.

Observation of the swing of the pendulum is a remedy both for pessimism and optimism. Every institution contains within itself the seeds of its own dissolution; every ideal ends by quickening into activity a contrary ideal. We swing backwards and forwards between the ideals of Order and Liberty. As Shakespeare says:¹

As surfeit is the father of much fast,
So every scope by the immoderate use
Turns to restraint. Our natures do pursue,
Like rats that ravin down their proper bane,
A thirsty evil; and when we drink we die.

The reaction against Liberalism will not be permanent. The nations will discover once more the truth of Homer's words: "God takes away half a man's manhood when he makes him a slave."

One symptom of the temporary eclipse of liberty is the rather surprising fact that several able and high-minded men of letters, who a hundred years ago would have said with Dr. Thomas Arnold, "Believe in the Pope? I would as soon believe in Jupiter!" have made their submission to the Church of Rome. Can we escape from our troubles by returning to the medieval theocracy? Some very competent thinkers, like Christopher Dawson, believe that this is the path to deliverance. The question is important, because it is possible, though

¹ *Measure for Measure*, Act I, Scene 3.

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I hope not likely, that the present orgy of nationalism may be followed by a conflict between two international organizations—the Red and the Black. It would be a hideous choice for lovers of liberty.

The Roman Church is essentially a form of dictatorship, like Communism and Nazism. It has a religious basis, but so have its rivals; it is, first and foremost, a State. On one side it is a continuation of the Roman Empire; on another, it is an attempt to put into practice the political philosophy of Plato's Republic. Theocracies must use the indispensable machinery of States which do not rest on force. They must rule partly by fraud. They must foster the belief in ecclesiastical miracles, and provide them themselves; they must make people believe that their priests and no others hold the keys of heaven and hell; they must use "Purgatory Pick-purse" for revenue purposes; and, above all, they must keep education in their own hands.¹ Such a system has some of the advantages which we have found in other dictatorships; but it arouses against itself a quite peculiar hatred, which may for a time find vent in a savage persecution of all religion as such. The Roman Church, in my opinion, is the custodian of a very valuable philosophy of religion, and of traditions which link our age with the older civilizations; but I cannot think that it holds out much hope for the future. There is no resurrection of dead mythologies, and many of the beliefs in-

¹ Cf. my *Outspoken Essays*, Second Series, p. 76.

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culcated by the Roman Church can be defended only (as they are by Catholic Modernists) on pragmatist lines, which a philosophy based on Plato and Aristotle can never acknowledge. The average "convert" to Romanism, in Lippmann's words, puts on manacles to keep his hands from trembling, and escapes to a citadel where he can feel safe and warm.

During the Great War the prediction was made that that convulsion would deal a severe blow at the higher kinds of religion, but would be followed by a great increase in superstitions and freak religions of all kinds. This is what has happened. Reluctance to accept death as a fact has led to spiritualism and necromancy, which were most unhappily encouraged by the adhesion of a well-known man of science. Reluctance to accept pain and disease encouraged Christian Science, of which there are said to be about 2,500 churches, most of them in the United States. Akin to Christian Science are various faith-healing societies, and individual practitioners of psychotherapy. In most of these there is a mixture of fraud and genuine superstition, which justifies itself by using the word science. Science, in fact, is not in a position to condemn these methods of treatment emphatically, because the limits of genuine psychotherapy have not yet been determined. The patient's confidence in the efficacy of the treatment is often essential to its success, and so a question of casuistry arises, which troubles the conscience of many medical men.

The border-line of scientific knowledge has also been explored and exploited by the psychoanalysts, whose profession has become lucrative since the war. Their doctrine cuts at the root of human responsibility, since we are not responsible for our unconscious minds; and, as often taught, it condemns asceticism and self-control, which are an essential part of morality. But it is generally admitted that Freud and Jung have made real contributions to the science of psychology.

In the popularity of these movements we see examples of that curious distrust of professionalism which is strongest in the United States, and weak in the Latin countries. The popularity of bone-setters, and the enormous sale of quack medicines, are evidence of this.

Another example of the lack of disciplined thought in America is the revival of what is there called fundamentalism, which means a return to the narrowest religious beliefs of the early Puritans. In England there is not much evidence of this, unless we include the curious vogue of Frank Buchman's "groups," which prove how contagious religious enthusiasm can be. In Germany we have the theology of Karl Barth, which may perhaps be described as a revival of the irrational and emotional side of Lutheranism. It has made very few converts in this country, where Lutheranism has been far weaker than Calvinism.

The horrors of war and revolution have un-

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doubtedly given a new edge to the terrible dilemma which Augustine stated so candidly, and which has never been escaped by him or anyone else. "Either God cannot abolish evil, or He will not. If He cannot, He is not omnipotent; if He will not, He is not good." The answers which have been given by theologians have a partial validity; but they do not satisfy many of those whose happiness has been wrecked by a great calamity.

But a still deeper wound has been inflicted, not really on Christianity, but on the secular apocalypticism which made the nineteenth century so smugly optimistic. We are beginning to forget the exuberant nonsense which then passed for wisdom. "In that blessed day," wrote Godwin, "there will be no war, no crimes, no administration of justice, as it is called, and no Government. There will be neither disease, anguish, melancholy, nor resentment. Every man will seek with ineffable ardour the good of all." It is only one stage further when Fourier predicted that as soon as the new social order is established, the earth itself will be transformed. The seas will be changed into lemonade, and the sharks will become pleasant and useful creatures. Marxism belongs to this school of thought. We are well rid of this "last of the great heresies," but its decay has quenched many hopes.

The prevalent anti-intellectualism in philosophy has to some extent blunted the rationalist attacks on Christian dogma. "Whatever suits souls is true,"

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say the pragmatists ; for truth has no other meaning. "There are two Christs," say the Catholic Modernists ; a Jewish apocalypticist "of limited intelligence," and the object of the Church's worship. Vaihinger's philosophy of "As if" has many adherents. But ultimately it will be found that Christianity cannot be so defended. There is a mythical element in all religion and in all philosophy ; but sound theology has never despised the intellect or consented to juggle with facts in the name of faith. When we try to envisage the eternal under the form of time, the unchanging counsels of God under the form of historical events, the spiritual world under the form of its moving shadow, then poetry, myth, and symbolism have their place ; we cannot dispense with them. There is even a sense in which the religious mind, convinced with Plato that the fully real can be fully known, and that its heavenly citizenship is a certain fact, turns its scepticism on the external world, and declares with Goethe that "all that is transitory is only a symbol." But there can be no reconciliation between Christian theology and American pragmatism. We must not play tricks with our souls.

Lippmann, in his brilliant *Preface to Morals*, has reminded us that fundamentally the Churches are secular institutions, governments preoccupied with the regulation of the unregenerate appetites of mankind. In the Gospels we are warned that all reformation must come from within. If the light that is in

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thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! But if thine eye be single, if thy heart be pure, thy whole body shall be full of light. Then we shall know the real values of things, and behave accordingly. But in dealing with the unregenerate and half-regenerate, the Church has to dangle before them gaudy rewards and lurid punishments. They must be coerced into goodness, which would not be necessary if they really cared for it.

This political machinery for dealing with the unconverted has lost its efficacy. It probably never had anything like as much influence as might have been supposed; but there is a widespread feeling that the old sanctions have gone, and that there is nothing to take their place. The intention of the Church was to convince men and women that the choice between right and wrong is infinitely important; and so it is. But the choice and its results were put before the multitude in a crude and coarse way; and a penalty has to be paid for what was really a want of faith in human disinterestedness. We cannot remind ourselves too often that Christ never encouraged us to expect to see an inconvenient crowd gathered round the narrow gate. The elect are "chosen out of the world"; they will never be in a majority. As Bishop Gore said, we want not more Christians but better Christians.

We are told sometimes that Christianity is preparing to die in its last ditch—the regulation of sexual life. If we compare the Gospels with the

sermons and ethical treatises of a later period, when asceticism, as understood in the cloister, had completely captured the Church, and not the Church only but other cults and philosophies outside the Church, we shall be surprised to find how little stress is laid on this side of conduct by our Lord. He was lenient to the merely disreputable sins, and very severe on radical defects of character, such as hypocrisy, hard-heartedness, and calculating worldliness. At the same time, he warns us sternly against indulgence in thoughts and desires which lead to immoral acts, and if not much is said about such offences, it may be that His disciples were removed by their spiritual enthusiasm from such temptations. St. Paul was obliged to legislate for small groups of converts living in a very corrupt society. His ideal is strict, but his regulations are sensible and not at all fanatical.

In spite of the Church, the Dark and the Middle Ages were amazingly licentious. The appearance of contagious disease at the end of the fifteenth century probably did more to check promiscuity than the exhortations of divines. Since then, there have been waves of Puritanism and waves of profligacy. In the last half of the nineteenth century in England the standard of purity, even among the aristocracy, who have never set a good example, was probably higher than in any other time or place in history. That, we may be told, is not saying much. But though public opinion at that time safeguarded the

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virtue of countless homes, there was a strong undercurrent of revolt and a reaction was sure to follow.

During the war, and for a few years after, all restraints were loosened. But the relations of the sexes are now much more normal. There are, however, three changes from the pre-war period. The use of contraceptives has made irregular and temporary unions much commoner. Prostitution has diminished to an astonishing extent. The social stigma attaching to adultery has been much relaxed. The third of these changes is a real defeat for Christian ethics, though we may agree with the late Father Tyrrell that "two cats tied together by the tails are a poor type of Christ and His Church." The marriage vow is the most solemn contract ever made by a man and woman. It is not a declaration of physical passion, but a promise of lifelong fidelity. To break it is in the highest degree dishonourable, and delinquents ought to be made to feel themselves disgraced.

To sum up these discursive reflections. Is there ground for deep discouragement or even despair in the present state of affairs in Europe? There have been long ages of decadence. If the six hundred years between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1100 had been blotted out, the world would not have lost much. But it is now certain that the economic and other causes which led to the inevitable ruin of Roman and Hellenistic civilization have no parallel in

modern Europe. The nations of Europe may commit suicide, but they are not dying of disease or old age.

Human nature changes very little. It is childish to suppose that such institutions as private property, the monogamous family, and religion, which have thousands of years of tradition behind them, can be uprooted in one generation by a few fanatics. When in the whole course of history has anything of the kind happened? We must steadily fight against apocalyptic expectations, whether the vision which we contemplate is agreeable to us or the reverse. Things do not happen in this way. "The more things change, the more they are the same." Two hundred years hence a future Dean of St. Paul's may be accepting an invitation to dine with the Amalgamated Trade Union of Aeroplane Makers, and they will give him as good a dinner as he now gets from the Drapers or Fishmongers. The actors, as Plotinus says, will have changed their masks; that is all.

And yet I cannot help hoping that war will then be a thing of the past. I have no right to think so, if the view taken in my last paragraph is true. But, as I think Sir Norman Angell, the ex-pacifist, says somewhere, we have, after all, abolished a few abuses. We no longer eat our enemies, or enslave their children. We no longer examine witnesses with the thumbscrew, or burn those who wish to go to a different Church. So perhaps we may discover that there is room in the world for Britons,

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French, and Germans, and that “our little hands were never meant to tear each other’s eyes.” Are not nine-tenths of the people of Europe even now in favour of peace and good will?

W. R. INGE

BRIGHTWELL MANOR
WALLINGFORD

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

I

CHANGING AMERICA

I

It was Sir Charles Dilke who taught the Victorians to think of the United States as "Greater Britain," and to regard that country as our daughter State ("*matre pulchra filia pulchrior*," perhaps) which was advancing more rapidly on the path which we were destined to follow.

This theory gave a peculiar interest to studies of American life and character. We could see ourselves magnified.

We should not now regard the two democracies as States of the same type, and those who know America would hesitate to call the United States Anglo-Saxon.

What I think we may say is this. Since the fall of the Roman Empire there have been only two new political experiments on a very large scale, and both of them have been made by our people. One is the Federal Constitution of the United States, drawn up after the Declaration of Independence; the other is the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The success of the former experiment is now assured, and its influence upon political philosophy has been very great. The United States of America,

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peopled by immigrants from every European country, who somehow manage to get on quite well with each other, is in impressive contrast with the disunited States of Europe, ruining themselves and each other in a silly game of beggar-my-neighbour.

The Old World League of Nations has failed; the New World League of Nations, recently started by Roosevelt, is likely to succeed.

Carl van Doren is a well-known figure in American literature and journalism. His new book *Three Worlds* (Cape) is autobiographical. His three worlds are called "pre-war," "post-war," and, with a query, "new world."

In reality, the first part is a charming description of old-fashioned country life in an isolated spot in the Middle West; the third part describes the reaction of the American mind to the great slump.

The second part, which includes the period of the boom, is so full of the author's personal relations that it is less interesting as a study of American life. I shall put in its place André Siegfried's *America Comes of Age*, published when the boom was at its height.

Van Doren himself is a hundred per cent American; that is to say, his father belonged to a Dutch family, his mother was a Tillotson, descended from the famous Archbishop of Canterbury, his great-grandfather German, and he has a strain of Indian blood.

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It is curious that the Americans, who are so sensitive about the slightest dash of the tarbrush, have no feeling against the Redskins. It is the same in Spain, where more than one family of haughty Castilian grandees is proud of its descent from the last kings of Tenochtitlan.

My own children are descended from Pocahontas, but I have not yet detected any clear Red Indian traits in their characters.

Europeans who laughed over the "monkey trial" at Dayton, when W. J. Bryan, former candidate for the Presidency, declared that he would believe that Jonah swallowed the whale "if the Bible said so," did not realize that the grim Puritan farmers of Tennessee and Kentucky—most of them, by the way, of English descent—believed themselves to be fighting in the last ditch for old American traditions against all the corrupting influences which were surging in from Europe.

It is this life of the old pioneers, now on its last legs, which Van Doren describes in the first part of his book. The scene is a tiny village in Illinois, where the farmers were beginning to sell their farms at a huge profit. But the little community remained, classless and friendly, meeting every week at a nondescript little church, working furiously, and looking to the future as an endless source of benefits to come.

His father was half farmer, half doctor, prosperous for a time but at last ruined by the characteristic

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American optimism which goes on borrowing and buying, as if progress must go on for ever. "My great-grandfather," he says, "was a pioneer, my grandfather was a squire, my father was ready to be a landlord and capitalist." But there was no slacking, and no self-indulgence.

In a little community of this kind, every man is a handy man who can turn his hand to anything, every woman a maid of all work without wages. The boys took up odd jobs to earn a little money; any paid work was reputable.

This mode of life, laborious, thrifty, enterprising and strict, is the genuine Puritan or Calvinist ideal. It produces strong characters and strong nations. It is because it has disappeared from our race that the rural parts of New England are either derelict or cultivated by Italians, Poles, Greeks, and Armenians, and the vast empty spaces of the British Empire are waiting for some tougher and more strenuous race to take them from us and develop them.

I shall now leave Van Doren and study Siegfried, who views America, at the time of her exuberant prosperity, with the eye of a Frenchman.

To Siegfried, Puritan democracy is fighting a losing battle against the newcomers. The Roman Church is the rallying point of the foreigner, whose customs and traditions it protects against Americanization. It stimulates the race-consciousness and the race-hatreds of Poles, Irish, and Italians.

"The English idea of government by disinterested gentlemen" has not been entirely stamped out, but most of the towns are ruled by the Irish, who "look upon the State as the means of obtaining the greatest possible advantages for themselves and their friends." With Catholics and Protestants alike, there is "a mysticism of comfort and success," which does not agree very well with real Christianity. Siegfried is naturally annoyed to find that to the average American an Italian is a pedlar, a Greek a cheap restaurant keeper, a Frenchman a low-class barber. "It never occurs to him that there are Frenchmen and Italians who are much more cultured than himself." In the Middle West especially, the people of the Old World are regarded as immoral and degenerate, ignorant of the most elementary rules of health, menaced by anarchy and revolution, and likely to die of hunger. From time to time, this conviction of superiority comes out in a very naïve way, even in diplomatic dispatches.

"A workman is far better paid in America than anywhere else in the world, and his standard of living is enormously higher." So Siegfried finds in 1927. This has been made possible, because "while the European workmen imagine that it is possible to earn more and yet produce less," the American improvement has coincided with an increase in production. "In 1923, 53·9 of the labouring class in America worked more than a 48-hour week." "The American working man is becoming a capitalist."

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“There are 800,000 holders of railway securities, and 630,000 in telephone companies.” Large-scale production is facilitated by the extraordinary uniformity of American habits. “The American is the most docile of men, and is moulded as easily as clay by national publicity.” With this insult, I leave Siegfried. Till my next article, when I must take up Van Doren again.

CHANGING AMERICA

II

SIEGFRIED, writing before the great depression, thinks that America has gained the whole world, and debates whether she is losing her soul. The standardization of which he complains was in part a reaction against exploitation.

Till the beginning of the present century great trusts were being formed which strangled their competitors by methods close akin to piracy. It was an age of uncontrollable thirst for gain and intense speculation, sharp battles between employers and employed, and incredible waste of the national resources.

The reaction took the form of a call to "Service," a blessed word at this time, a combination of the civic virtue of the Protestant, the materialism of Bentham, and devotion to progress.

"It is the doctrine of an optimistic Pharisee trying to reconcile success with justice." Nevertheless, "such ethics have their purpose, for they advocate honesty, good manners, and kindness."

The French system, depending on patient labour and traditional good taste, is still successful wherever standardization is not essential; where it can be

applied, America leads easily. It is working towards the single goal of production; it is organized to produce things rather than people, with output set up as a god.

This means collectivism in production, with intensive division and organization of labour, and a great risk for the freedom of the individual. Can the personality of the individual recover itself in consumption, after being so crippled in production?

So much for Siegfried, who hopes that Europe, or at least France, may escape a fate which he dreads. Now let us return to Van Doren, and see how the great slump has affected his outlook.

"The villain of the twenties had been dullness; the villain of the thirties was poverty." Americans had been badly trained to face poverty; for the first time in their lives they knew *fear*, of which William James had boasted that it had been banished from American life. A society which had lived on credit found its bubbles suddenly pricked.

What was the result among the literary class? "Many of the younger writers in New York became Communists." They knew very little about Russia, but they imagined it as a powerfully planned society, in which every man was employed, and no man could be rich by the labour of another.

Van Doren says no more than the truth. There has been a torrent of American books about Russia, nearly all of them laudatory—a really astonishing phenomenon when we remember the questions a

traveller had to answer before he was allowed to land in God's own country. "Are you an anarchist? Are you a polygamist? Do you wish to overturn the institutions of this country by force?" They added: "What is your ultimate destination?" I supposed "ultimate" meant "proximate," and named the General Seminary, New York, where I was to lecture. They wished to enter it as the General Cemetery, till I showed them my return ticket.

The old tradition in America had been individual freedom. That was what they offered with both hands to the immigrant. But what is the use of freedom to the starving, who cannot eat it, to the freezing who cannot wear it, and the homeless who cannot sleep in it?

Then Sinclair Lewis wrote an ironical book called *It Can't Happen Here*, denouncing Fascism. That was sure to be popular. What the Young Americans could not or would not see was that Stalin himself is very like a Fascist dictator, and that the so-called Communist State is every year becoming more like the other totalitarian States.

But if they had seen it, would it have frightened them? The late James M. Beck, who died in April 1936, had a book almost ready in which he warns his countrymen of what he believed to be a serious danger. "We have to-day, in fact, though not in theory, a totalitarian Socialistic State." The Federal bureaucracy to-day employs more than 800,000 civil servants. In spite of the Constitution, Congress

now attempts, in the imposition and expenditure of the taxes, no longer "to promote the general welfare," but to assist special classes. There has been, says Mr. Beck, "a portentous change." The new Americans take no interest in politics, and care nothing for the Supreme Court. "The citizen has lost any sense of constitutional morality."

Well, this "portentous change" is familiar to us at home. The only wonder is that it has been so slow in crossing the Atlantic.

Van Doren ends, "Even if there should be in America a recovery within the forms of democracy, it would mean a new attitude for Americans. Their republic would not seem to them a last achievement; Russia would have a newer model." A short time ago this would have been rank blasphemy, and dangerous for the speaker!

It is well known that the sympathy between Russia and the United States is mutual. Russia looks across the sea and beholds a mechanized, standardized State which is still very rich. The individual withers, and the State is more and more. Dialectical materialism—the creed of Marx—sounds very like the worship of machinery. Is not Liberty, as Lenin said, a bourgeois conception, belonging to the last century? Is it not a hindrance to output?

Can we really envisage the possibility of such a *volte-face*, such a repudiation of all her old gods, on the part of the United States? I cannot believe it; the young intellectuals are noisy and cocksure, as

they are with us ; but they do not count for much. America is a country with a proud tradition.

Of one thing I am sure : that if America suppresses all individual liberty and becomes a totalitarian State of whatever complexion, it will be because it is no longer even predominantly Anglo-Saxon. But this is just what the American eugenists, men like Madison Grant, Lothrop Stoddard, and East, have been telling us for many years. "The Great Race is passing"; the old Americans are literally dying out. When I was last in America I was told that in some of the old townships in Connecticut there were hardly any born Americans left. New Haven looked like an Italian town. The commonest name in New York is not Smith or Jones, but Cohen.

This is too big a question to raise at the end of an article. A Christian will be inclined to say that our race, on both sides of the Atlantic, has been worshipping false gods. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." If so, it is not too late to mend.

That the countrymen of Shakespeare will dwindle away, or that they will take as their model the beehive and the termitary, are two things which I refuse to believe.

II

THE LAW OF NATURE

APART from positive revelation, is there a consciousness of right and wrong, implanted by Nature in the minds of all normal men and women, and claiming absolute authority?

The worshippers of the State, beginning with Hobbes and Machiavelli, and continuing through the Hegelians to the modern dictators and their supporters, say there is none. The State is the creator of right and wrong. It is, says Hegel, the Divine idea on earth. "It is the mortal God," says William Wallace, a philosopher of the same school, "and in this world should be ubiquitous and omnipotent."

This is in my opinion the wickedest of all heresies. The worship of the State is grovelling and degrading idolatry, fit only for a nation of slaves.

The opposite view—the theory of natural rights and of natural right—is most certainly not, as Professor Ritchie says, "the outgrowth of the Protestant revolt against the authority of tradition." It is, and always has been, the court of appeal for those who are oppressed or persecuted by the State; but it is as old as Christianity, and much older.

We find it in Sophocles, who makes Antigone say to the King: "I did not think that your decrees

were of such force that they could override the unwritten and immovable laws of heaven." The Stoics held that the law of Nature is the law of God. One of them, Ulpian, is the author of the famous pronouncement, "By the law of Nature all men are born free."

St. Paul says that the Gentiles who do not know the Jewish law are a law to themselves, obeying the law written in their hearts. Origen, in the third century of our era, says: "We may obey the laws of the State only when they agree with the Divine law; when they contradict Divine and natural law we must obey God alone." Divine and natural law are assumed to be the same.

This has been the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church. "In the court of conscience," says Thomas Aquinas, "there is no obligation to obey an unjust law." Who is to decide whether a law is unjust? The only possible appeal is to the law of Nature, which secures to all mankind certain elementary rights.

But, it was objected, according to the law of Nature, there would be no war, no slavery, no private property, no Government. This is not a practicable ideal.

True, said the Church authorities; these institutions do not exist in Heaven. But we are not in Heaven, nor even in the golden age. God has sanctioned a relative law of Nature, which binds all men under present conditions. Under present con-

ditions the enjoyment of property honestly come by is a natural right, and we must have the Governments.

This seems to take away the right of rebellion, which the theory of natural law sanctions. King James I argued that subjects ought to obey a bad king, who has been sent them perhaps as a punishment for their sins. Our ancestors, however, decided that, sinful as they no doubt were, they had not deserved the Jameses.

In happier days than ours, when no one had dared to reject liberty as a bourgeois conception, Locke taught that men, "who are by nature free, equal, and independent," have agreed to accept Governments as long as they are thus enabled to preserve their lives, their liberty and their property. So long and no longer.

Blackstone in 1765 asserts that absolute rights, invested in men by the immutable laws of nature, include liberty, security, and private property. The American Declaration of Independence declares that these rights are "self-evident." The French Revolution defined freedom as liberty to do anything that does not harm others; "property is an inviolable and sacred right." These revolutionaries would be much too conservative for our modern Tories.

The appeal to the law of Nature is not yet obsolete. In 1898 an Order in Council directed the magistrates of Southern Rhodesia to judge cases between natives by native law, "so far as that law is not repugnant

to natural justice or to any Order made by Her Majesty in Council." Her Majesty in Council would be naturally just.

Lastly, we may refer to the recent Papal Encyclical on the oppression of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany. The Pope, quite in accordance with the traditional Catholic doctrine inherited from the Stoics, declares that "the true public good is finally determined by the nature of man. Every positive law must be examined in the light of the commandments of natural law."

It is plain that unless there are agreed principles of right and justice, which are prior to and more authoritative than the laws and decrees of particular nations, there is no check whatever on the aggression of any nation which is strong enough to practise it. The world would be in a state of war, actual or probable.

The same danger threatens the elementary rights of citizens in every community where natural law is denied. The State may commandeer at will all the property of the citizens. It may require them to risk or sacrifice their lives in a war with which they have no concern. It may prohibit under savage penalties any expression of private judgment.

There is no extremity of injustice and oppression to which a Government may not proceed, if the principle be admitted that the individual has no rights against the State.

Things are now being done in several civilized

countries to which there is no historical parallel since the Dark Ages.

Protestants cannot, it is true, admit the Roman Catholic doctrine that one Church is the sole interpreter of natural law. This is only to substitute another positive tribunal for the State as the creator and arbiter of the law of conscience. Such a theory emasculates human freedom as completely as servitude to the State.

Nor can we admit that the law of Nature is absolutely immutable—another Catholic doctrine. In several ways the human conscience makes demands upon us which it did not always make, and alters the scale of moral values. It is partly these changes, approved by the enlightened conscience of intelligent persons, which cause the conflicts between reformers and traditionalists.

Nevertheless, until we return to the conviction that there is such a thing as natural right and justice, which no decrees of man can override, the world will remain "full of darkness and cruel habitations." We are threatened with what Gladstone said of the Government of King Bomba at Naples—"The negation of God erected into a system."

The evil spirit seems just now to be triumphing. It rests with those nations which still enjoy liberty and hate war to show that they value their convictions. As Cicero said of the Romans, "Other nations may endure slavery; liberty is the inalienable possession of the Roman people."

III

THE WORSHIP OF THE STATE

I do not think we can understand what is going on in Germany or Italy unless we realize that what Hobbes called "Leviathan," the God-State, has ousted for the time all other objects of worship.

The idea of the development of human personality—that, as Lord Halifax once said, "Government is the instrument to secure conditions favourable to the fullest possible development of personality"—has been rejected.

All the little dogs of the Labour Party are in full yelp at the heels of Hitler and Mussolini, and heaven forbid that I should join in this hunt. But it is as well for us to realize that we have neighbours who are as far as possible from accepting what is really, as Lord Halifax says, the ideal of popular Government.

Fascism and Nazism (and, of course, Sovietism, too) wish to abolish the individual, and an abolished individual cannot possibly develop into a person. Let us hear Mussolini himself; he wrote the article on Fascism in the Italian Encyclopædia.

"Fascism is for the State, and for the individual as far as he coincides with the State. Liberalism negates the State in the interest of the individual. Fascism affirms the State as the true reality of the individual. For the Fascist,

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everything is in the State, and outside the State nothing legal or spiritual can exist, still less have any value."

The will of the State," says a German jurist, "is the soul of the law." Let us consider what this means. The individual has no rights whatever against the State. He may not have broken any law—that does not matter; if there are "gaps in the law," the communal interest may step in and protect itself.

The famous political police, which in Russia is called the Ogpu, is designed to support that part of the collective interest which is *not* secured by law. These agencies are bound by no rules; they may kill, or they may segregate—hence the concentration camp in Germany, the *confino* in Italy, Siberia and the Arctic in Russia. When cases come before the courts, the judges decide them quite frankly on political grounds. "The safety of the State is the supreme law."

When the Communists, who were certainly innocent of burning the Reichstag, were acquitted of treason, there was a storm of indignation, precisely because abstract justice had been allowed to prevail against the State, which is above all such considerations. A new "People's Court" was at once created which would not be hampered by such old-fashioned ideas. The Communists were avowedly out of sympathy with Nazism; but no one out of sympathy with Nazism has any right to exist in Germany.

Under Fascism, a man has no private rights

whatever. There is no way of behaving, however insignificant, in which a man can say, "That is not the business of the State." In practice, he may worship God as he thinks fit, if he worships alone; but as soon as he forms one of a group, with a sense of fellowship of its own, he must expect trouble.

There are only two ways in which a religious community can be tolerated under Fascism. It may be a State Church; or it may be a subordinate, privileged denomination, like the Catholic Church in Italy.

The worship of the God-State naturally determines foreign politics. It was Machiavelli who first, perhaps, enunciated the theory with complete cynicism. "Where the safety of the country is at stake no consideration of justice or injustice, of mercy or cruelty, of honour or dishonour, can find a place. Every scruple must be set aside."

The fury of the Italians against us during the Abyssinian war was not, as they pretended, because we were grinding our own axe; that they would have understood. After all, we have our own God-State. What infuriated them was that we dragged them as criminals before the bar of public opinion because they had dishonoured their signature and violated freely made contracts. To which their answer was, "Of course we did. Why should we not? We acknowledge no right that we did not create ourselves."

It was not easy for us to understand how any

decent people could take such a line; but that is because we do not understand the philosophy of the God-State. If we had read our own Hobbes, or Bacon, or the German Fichte, or Hegel, we might understand it better.

This State-worship seems to me not only utterly immoral but insane, so insane that I cannot take the menace of it quite so seriously as many are doing. For why should we pick out the State for deification? Do we not belong to a great many other societies, each of which has a limited but indefeasible claim upon us? Do not almost all moral problems consist in adjusting the conflicting claims of these societies? Have I no duties to myself, the duty of laying out to the best advantage the talents, be they five or two or one, with which I have been entrusted by my Maker? Have I no duties to my family, to my friends, to my profession or business, to my Church? Are there not some associations to which I belong which are wider than the nation—the comity of civilized peoples, and humanity at large, not to speak of those values which we call absolute or intrinsic because they are acknowledged to exist in their own right and not as means to anything else—moral goodness, truth, and art, in all their branches? And if we have not given up religion altogether, does not the first command in the Decalogue still hold good, “Thou shalt have no other gods but Me”? And is not St. Peter’s fourfold injunction, “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood.

Fear God. Honour the King," much sounder than the command to sacrifice all that makes life worth living before the altar of that grotesque fetish, the State?

I cannot believe that mankind will long be content to worship this idol. For he has not much to offer to his worshippers. If the God-State does not break up from within, it will either bring down upon itself a coalition of liberty-loving peoples, pledged to destroy it like a mad dog, or it will come up against some other God-State, which has an equal right to divinize its own supposed national interests.

The new dictatorships are a curious medley of antiquated ideas and very modern methods. In practice, human nature is much wiser than doctrinaire theory, and there must be many homes in Italy and Germany where these crazy doctrines are simply ignored, or softened into an honourable and sensible patriotism.

Still, the attempt to depersonalize man, when erected into a dogma, and enforced by all the arts of terrorism and lying propaganda, must be and is a great danger to civilization.

IV

THE PROSPECTS OF PEACE

"THE love of war," said Buckle nearly a hundred years ago, "is, as a national taste, utterly extinct." And yet, as a recent authority writes, "there is only a moderate amount of probability in favour of declining war."

In the last four centuries, ending with the Great War, we have been at war 207 years, at peace 193 years. It is not easy to break off old bad habits, as we know in our private lives.

War is not only foolish and wicked, but insane. The romance of it has departed; the reality is merely ugly and cruel. The soldiers on both sides have for the most part no notion why they are fighting. The prizes of victory are worthless. Unwilling subjects are a weakness to a nation. To exact an indemnity is to create unemployment at home. If your best customer and your chief rival own the same head, it is not good business to cut that head off.

What nation was most interested in keeping the peace in 1914? Germany. In a few years it would have been the richest as well as the strongest country in Europe. But they were hypnotized by such pernicious nonsense as we in England have long ceased to tolerate. "War is an integral part of

God's universe, developing man's noblest attributes" (Moltke). "The condemnation of war is immoral" (Treitschke). "War is a divine institution and a work of love" (Wilke).

The most primitive tribes are not very pugnacious. But the instinct is so deeply rooted in us that we have to sublimate it by playing competitive games and watching races. There must be a mock-battle; occasionally, I suppose, some people want the real thing hot and strong. "Personally," wrote Theodore Roosevelt to Senator Lodge, "I rather hope the fight will come soon. The clamour for peace has convinced me that this country wants war. We would take Canada." It is needless to say that the attack was to be levelled at Great Britain, which had never given the United States the slightest provocation.

But very few people in any country really want war, now that the horrors of modern war are known. And yet there is a general impression that we are, or have been, in great danger of being drawn into it this year. The other day I met a good lady who was already filling her cellar with potted meat, biscuits, and other eatables useful during a famine.

Apart from pugnacity, what are the chief causes of this mad state of affairs?

I do not think emperors or dictators are more bellicose than republics, nor that armament firms exercise the sinister influence which Socialists attribute to them. At present, in this country, it is our

Socialists and ex-pacifists who are breathing threatenings and slaughter against nations who have chosen a form of government which they happen to dislike.

Wars between rival ideologies are only too possible. We have had nothing like them since the wars of religion, and the prospect is almost too horrible to contemplate. It is significant that Georges Sorel, the French Syndicalist, after speaking, quite like a Prussian, of the invigorating effects of a war, adds that "a great extension of proletarian violence" might do as well.

Other real causes are the want of raw materials in the homeland—a more or less rational motive which might be satisfied by peaceable arrangement; the wish to stave off revolution at home—a bad speculation, since nations on the brink of revolution are usually beaten; a fit of megalomania—we had a mild attack in the last quarter of the nineteenth century; and, most potent of all, fear, which unhappily is sometimes well grounded.

"Where there is fear there is danger," as Professor Hans Delbrück said to me in 1911, when I was in Berlin. It is fear which leads to secret understandings and pacts with other nations, made without the knowledge of the peoples concerned. It was the naval arrangement with France which above all made it almost impossible for us to stand out in 1914, though we were as little concerned with Serbia then as we are with Czechoslovakia now.

But we allow ourselves to be entangled without realizing it, and we are then told that honour requires us to keep to our agreements.

Is it true that we are deeply entangled now? Can the French, who have deceived us again and again—about Turkey and Greece, about Italy and Abyssinia, and about neutrality in Spain—drag us into a quarrel with Germany, which might be the end of us as a Great Power, and the end of European civilization? As for neutrality in Spain, do my readers know that Franco had, in February, among his prisoners of war 6,000 French, 3,500 Russians, 3,000 Czechoslovaks, 900 Belgians, 275 Americans, and 236 British? Fifteen thousand prisoners probably implies something like 100,000 international fighting-men, nearly all of whom, except the Russians, must have been passed over the French frontier.

We are told that we are pledged. I am more inclined to agree with Lord Beaverbrook, who wrote three years ago: "There are no commitments which the British people cannot bring to an end, as soon as they resolve to do so. There are no pledges which cannot be honourably terminated. Are we bound by Locarno? Certainly not."

Of course, an entirely unprovoked attack, like that contemplated by Theodore Roosevelt, may be made upon us. But some decent excuse is generally necessary, and, after all, we are awkward customers to tackle. We almost always win one battle in each war—the last.

I do not believe there will be a war this year, because I am told that the German army chiefs do not want it. What they really want is an alliance with post-revolutionary Russia, to be followed, no doubt, by certain territorial readjustments in Eastern Europe. This can hardly be brought about while Hitler and Stalin are both in power; Stalin in fact has shot his generals whom he believed to be in favour of it; but a war between those two countries would be extremely inconvenient to both. However, in this demented continent, anything may happen, and perhaps we are right to be prepared.

It is very difficult to say whether the majority of people on the Continent share our conviction that war is a barbarous anachronism and a colossal folly.

The Scandinavian nations have plainly renounced war altogether as an instrument of policy. But I have a theory that north-western Europe is a distinct group with a mentality of its own. We understand the Scandinavians, and they understand us. Constitutional monarchy, parliamentary popular government, a tendency always to settle disputes by conciliation, and full freedom of speech, public meeting, and writing—all these things north-western Europe values and believes in, though in other countries they have been discarded.

The new countries are also pacific; even South America seems to be getting tired of wars and revolutions. If the worst comes to the worst, the whole civilized world will not be involved.

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It seems to me that moral and religious teachers ought to lose no opportunity of protesting against the deification of the State, the worst and most dangerous of all modern heresies. To put reasons of State above the moral law is to condemn civilization to inevitable suicide, since one universal empire is out of the question.

“Patriotism is not enough.” But we must not despise or condemn one of the noblest of human emotions, which brought the rare tears into the eyes of Christ, and made St. Paul willing to be accursed for his brethren. Even a too fervent patriotism is much better than class-wars and sectional treason. Only, as individuals have learned to live together without insulting each other and claiming “satisfaction” with sword or pistol, so the nations of Europe, sharers in the same civilization, must learn to listen to the simple appeal, “Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?”

V

“GERMANY SPEAKS”

MESSRS. THORNTON BUTTERWORTH have in my opinion rendered a great public service by publishing this earnest appeal for understanding and friendship by the leading members of the German Government (*Germany Speaks*). Has such a thing ever been done before? I do not think so.

Here we have the names of the foremost men in Germany—von Ribbentrop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, von Neurath, President of the Cabinet Council, Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, Frick, Minister of the Interior, and others in similar positions, addressing the British people and begging them to put aside prejudice.

I say that it is the duty of all who are anxious about the European situation—and which of us is not?—to read this book carefully and dispassionately. I do not envy those who can lay it down unmoved, and still full of suspicion against any overtures from that quarter.

I do not suggest for a moment that we should accept the whole of the German case. These writers are avowedly advocates of their country. I am no Nazi; if I were a German, since I find it difficult to hold my tongue, I should soon be in a concentration camp.

If there is anything to be said in extenuation of the persecution of the Jews, it is not I who will say it. The fustian about racial purity is scientifically absurd, and the policy of driving the Jews out of the country is not only cruel and unjust, but as foolish as the expulsion of the Huguenots by Louis XIV.

Nor have I any sympathy with the attempt to coerce and muzzle the Churches. This subject is, perhaps wisely, omitted in the book before us.

Nor am I impressed by the claim that 99 per cent of Germans are in favour of the Government. It is quite impossible that any Government, however popular, should win the free votes of 99 per cent of the population. There is only one thing which would unite the whole German people as one man. The 99 per cent would be real if a coalition was formed against Germany, pledged to destroy all that they are trying to do, and reduce them again to misery.

Such a coalition has been freely talked of. It would consist of ourselves, who profess to have abandoned war as an instrument of policy; of some twelve million Russian barbarians fighting under the bloodstained banner of Communism; and on the west there would be a million negroes, armed and drilled by France. These are all to be turned loose to devastate and destroy.

I do not think the coalition would win. It would be hopelessly divided in its aims; half the home population, at any rate here, would hate the war.

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The probable result would be just that ascendancy of Germany which is so much feared, and among the losers all the horrors of civil war and revolution.

I have said what I think against parts of the book. But as a whole it is a splendid picture of a nation reborn after great tribulation, trying a great experiment, far more interesting and praiseworthy than the "Russian experiment," of which we hear so much.

For the object of this experiment is to unite a whole nation in an earnest campaign of duty and discipline, of self-culture, and self-denial. There are to be no more sectional treasons, no more class-conflicts. The situation before National Socialism was serious. The Weimar Republic deserved more support than it received; but the Marxists did not want social peace. Disorder has been replaced by mutual loyalty and co-operation. So far, industrial peace has really been secured. The chapter dealing with social policy should certainly be read.

Another very interesting chapter is on sport and physical training. Here they have left us far behind, as the Olympic Games in 1936 showed.

The German legislation in the cause of eugenics interests me particularly because I have studied the subject ever since my friendship with Sir Francis Galton. The regulations seem to me very sound, but much more drastic than our people would ever tolerate. Compulsory sterilization ought, I think, to be employed only in extreme cases if at all.

The birth-rate in Germany fell catastrophically after the war, when the nation was both disheartened and demoralized. The present Government is trying to encourage population by large bonuses given to the parents of large families. I do not like this method; the country is not really underpopulated, and cottages crowded with children must be very uncomfortable. However, the effect of these schemes is never so great as was expected, and the Germans have a special reason for wishing to avoid a shortage of labour. They are afraid of a large influx of workmen from Russia, where the increase of population, both before and after the revolution, has been enormous. The Russian birth-rate may be a greater menace to civilization than Russian propaganda. The Germans no doubt are looking ahead; but just at present it is more difficult to escape from Russia than from Dartmoor prison.

Germany has been centuries behind England and France in national consolidation. The Holy Roman Empire prevented the unification of Germany, as the Holy Roman Church prevented the unification of Italy. The Thirty Years War left the country not only ruined but cut up like a jig-saw puzzle. Even Bismarck's Germany consisted of twenty-two federal States, some of which even had their own armies.

All this has been swept away, and I do not think much sympathy need be felt for the pocket principalities now merged in one great nation.

Bismarck had his reasons for excluding Austria;

but these are no longer operative, and the incorporation of what remained of the Austrian Empire, cruelly curtailed after the war, was an obvious and reasonable step, which would have been taken earlier and in a more regular manner, but for the jealous opposition of France.

As for the German part of Czechoslovakia, it was under a German (Austrian) flag only twenty years ago. If the Germans in Bohemia want to join their brethren, is this to be made a *casus belli*?

Then there is the vexed question of the colonies.

I do not think it is indiscreet at this distance of time to record what King George V said to a friend of mine not long after the beginning of the war. "I hope," said the King, "that if we win this war, we shall not annex a single square mile of territory." We all know now that he was right, and the difficulties of making restitution, though great, ought not to be insuperable. I fear that my suggestion, "Give them the Irish Free State," would not be practical politics.

The idea of attacking Germany, with such allies as we should have, just because we are afraid that their people are becoming too powerful, is to my mind utterly abominable. My prayers for victory would stick in my throat, even if somebody near and dear to me were forced to fight in such an unholy war.

Most of us do not like their system of Government. No more do I. But after a revolution some years of

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rule by a strong hand is necessary. It has always been so. Let us cease to scream “Fascism,” which is not much more than a political swear-word, and consider instead that across the North Sea an extraordinarily interesting experiment is being tried, which may show us the way to end industrial strife.

If this book does not satisfy you, I would say, go and see for yourselves. Those to whom I have talked have found more to admire than to blame in Hitler’s Germany, and they have found not only great courtesy but a friendly disposition towards our country.

VI

A GERMAN LOOKS AT ENGLAND

To see ourselves as others see us is salutary, if we are inclined to be vain; if we are not, we may congratulate ourselves that we know many more things to our own disadvantage than our worst enemy is likely to discover.

As a nation, we are interesting to foreigners, and perplexing. We are difficult to know; we not only live on an island, but every Englishman is an island. I can think of no qualities, good or bad, which have not been attributed to our countrymen, except meekness and loquacity; and even so, some Englishmen are meek, and some Englishwomen are loquacious.

There have been several French books about us, clever and amusing but rather superficial. The Frenchman has preconceived ideas about England—that we live in a perpetual fog; that we are subject to “the spleen”; that we drown ourselves in the Thames in vast numbers; that we have a hundred religions and only one sauce; that we have indomitable wills; that we are perfidious, and that we are a nation of shopkeepers.

As a matter of fact our climate is pleasant enough for two-thirds of the year; our suicide-rate is below the average; we can get a very good dinner

if we like to pay for it; we are not at all treacherous; and we are poor shopkeepers because we do not take care of the pence.

The best foreign books about England, I think, are Santayana's *Soliloquies in England*, a very charming book spiced with good-natured criticism, and Cohen Portheim's *England the Unknown Isle*, with the chapters about us in *The Discovery of Europe*.

But I wish to recommend heartily a recent book translated with the title of *Those English* (Sidgwick and Jackson). The author, Kurt von Stutterheim, has been the London correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt* since 1923, and we have been lucky to have such an astonishingly well-informed, clever, and appreciative interpreter of our national life to a foreign capital.

He is not entirely blind to our faults—we should not wish him to be so; but he ends by saying that England's "ancestral virtues of tenacity, honesty, knowledge of life, and will to power are still flourishing. It has enormous untapped reserves of a material and moral nature. Many have lived to do penance for mistaking the Englishman's indifference and lack of ambition for weakness."

The world is just now looking to England with respect and wonder, as the one country which has gone peacefully on its own way, while the rest of Europe is seething with unrest, groaning under tyrannies and threatened with bankruptcy.

Von Stutterheim ascribes our good fortune to

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our national character, which he describes in a rather too flattering way, but with great discernment. All that he says about us is what an appreciative friend might say without falsehood; it is this which makes his book such pleasant reading. There is only one compliment to which I am inclined to demur.

He says more than once that we are the most astute diplomatists in the world. This opinion is held by many on the Continent, but I doubt if it is true. Lord Haldane told me that the French are much the cleverest nation in diplomacy. Our success, which has certainly been remarkable, is due to the fact that no nation really wants to see the British Empire destroyed. We threaten no one; for a hundred years after Waterloo our fleet prevented a ruinous world-war. And if we fell, there would almost certainly be a general scramble for territory which would deluge the world in blood, and quite possibly would destroy civilization for centuries, as happened when the Roman Empire fell to pieces. "When the oak falls," says a Greek proverb, "every man gathers wood." The prostrate British oak would tempt spoilers from north, south, east, and west.

Our author sees that we are no longer in a privileged position, and that our dislike of large-scale organization may put us at a disadvantage; but he says that "no one knows the English who has not seen them when they are in danger." I

hope this confidence is justified; but we are living on our prestige as victors in the Great War, just as Russia, that giant with feet of clay, lived for a hundred years on the prestige of having beaten Napoleon. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

The English reader will find many things in this book to put him in good conceit with himself. But I will pick out a few observations which are not obvious, and which show that this German critic has kept his eyes wide open.

There is, he says, very little snobbery and class-consciousness now, except among middle-class climbers and Socialist agitators. The aristocrat never talks or thinks about his class. The working man resents being called a proletarian. The millions who live in county council cottages belong, in fact, to the *petite bourgeoisie*.

English good taste is very good. The Englishman is *par excellence* the civilized man, and shows it above all in his architecture and the interior decoration of his houses.

"The Englishman has a rooted objection to marrying for money, so that girls who are rolling in wealth often remain unmarried. The Englishwoman is more calculating." True; but how did he find it out?

The criticisms are equally good. "The English can be indescribably dull." "As a housekeeper, the Englishwoman lags behind her German sister. The

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greater the number of girls who go straight from school to factories, the greater the number who cannot make a home for their husbands.”

Legal costs are monstrously high. Justice is not furthered by the fact that some barristers make thirty thousand a year or more. Why is it worth while to pay them at this rate? There is nothing like it in any other European country.

There is thus a little powder mixed with a great deal of jam. But it would do something to make international relations pleasanter if our great newspapers could find, to represent them at Berlin, journalists as sympathetic and discriminating as Kurt von Stutterheim.

VII

CAIN AND ABEL

IT is nearly a hundred years since Lord Macaulay helped to persuade Parliament to remove Jewish disabilities. "An Englishman of the Jewish religion" was henceforth to enjoy the same rights as an Englishman of the Christian religion. In other words, "Jew" is the name of a religion, not of a nation.

It was then thought that other nations would soon copy this obviously just and sensible solution of the Jewish question. An old Victorian may be forgiven for thinking that in this and other matters the twentieth century is retrogressing towards the dark ages.

The Jews themselves, or a great many of them, are no longer content to be Englishmen or Americans or Frenchmen of the Jewish religion. The plague of nationalism, which is disintegrating empires everywhere, has caught hold of them.

The troubles in Eastern Europe have had much to do with it. Jewish refugees, who have settled all over the world, have no country except their race and creed. A Russian Jew was never "a Russian of the Jewish religion"; and it is fair to remember that these foreign Jews, "people without a fatherland," were really something of a nuisance, though not a menace, in Germany.

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But the shameful treatment to which they are exposed, in Germany and now also in Austria, has made multitudes of Jews fanatical Zionists, and has roused the indignation of all who care for justice and fair play.

The irony of history has never been more signally illustrated than in the fortunes of the Israelites. Before the conquest of Canaan they were tribes of Bedouins, occupying the oases to the south of Palestine. They were nomads, not tillers of the ground; and the Mosaic legislation shows a pathetic anxiety to preserve their old customs and prevent them from being corrupted by sedentary civilization.

But the attempt was bound to fail. The tribes drifted across from the desert to the land which by contrast seemed to flow with milk and honey. They mingled freely with the Canaanites, whom they found in occupation, and adopted not only their habits but much of their religion, with its agricultural festivals and far from edifying rites.

Normally, the fate of conquering nomads is to be absorbed by the conquered race, like the Mongols in Hungary and China.

Racially, the Jews may not have much Bedouin blood. The famous Jewish nose may be seen on Hittite bas-reliefs, and in many parts of the Levant to-day; it is not Semitic.

But the Jews pulled themselves together and purified their religion from the Canaanite taint. Judaism is a religion of the wilderness. In it "the

divine omnipotence blazes in solitary splendour, like the sun over the desert." The same has been said of Islam, which Westcott called petrified Judaism.

From the very first these small tribes, which never held together for long, were hammered and battered as no other nation has been. They could not expel the Philistines, who were stranded after a raid on Egypt in the land to which they gave their name, from the fertile coast lands. Their land was overrun; they were carried into captivity; and finally they were scattered over the face of the earth.

They sometimes hankered after the fleshpots of Egypt, but the fates had a very different destiny in store for them.

All history is a record of challenge and response. "Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth."

It is possible for the test to be too severe; then a nation succumbs. But if it can just hold its own, it comes out so tough that those who have had an easier time cannot stand up against it.

Bedouin habits were relaxed after the conquest of Canaan; but the strain was no less. Ever since the dispersion among the Gentiles the community has had to hold its own against intense hostile pressure, and it was doubly rewarded for its tenacity. It was hardened and toughened, and since it was left outside the feudal and agrarian organization of society it was driven to those gainful occupations which Moses seems to have dreaded for those for

whom he legislated. Unfortunately, this was not a career which has made the Jews popular. It is part of human nature, says Tacitus with withering truth, to hate those whom you have injured. And if the injury only helps the victim to come out on the top it is human nature to hate him still more.

Queer stories are widely believed to account for their success. There is, we are told, an international committee of rich Jews, bound by a conspirators' oath, whose hidden hand is behind all troubles from the French Revolution to the Russian.

In reality they have no international organization. The links are voluntary and private; they drink no toasts to a king across the water; they obey no foreign rabbi. There is no organization, either political or ecclesiastical, and international finance is not likely to be enthusiastic in favour of Communism.

A friend of mine tried to find out whether there is anything at all like a Jewish stranglehold on the City of London. The result of his inquiries was that there is none, but there is a Scottish stranglehold! If Hitler wants to get rid of the Jews, why does he not import a few thousand Scots? They are unquestionably Aryans.

I spoke of the irony of history. In Palestine to-day we have a fierce antagonism between the pastoral Arab Bedouin and the Jews, who are sedentary cultivators. This is the reverse of what happened when the nomad Hebrews first crossed the Jordan.

We, with our usual well-meaning meddlesome-

ness, are poking our noses into the oldest of all quarrels, the quarrel between Cain and Abel. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And the Lord had respect to Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering he had not respect."

The sacred writer sympathizes with Abel; but all through history, since Abel is not a man of letters, he has met with scanty sympathy when, as often happens, Cain kills him in revenge. Each of them tries to encroach on the other.

Abel's methods are violent. He raids the lands of the cultivator, massacres the inhabitants and boasts, like Attila, that the grass never grows where his horse's feet have trod. Cain gradually encloses the pastures and hunting-grounds of the nomad, secures his communications by roads and railways, and makes Abel's existence impossible.

We hear a great deal of the Armenian massacres; but we have forgotten how Skobelev slaughtered the Teke Turkomans, and how the Kirghiz were exterminated to make way for the Russian muzhik.

The same thing happened in North and South America. The Indian hunters were exterminated; at first their place was taken by ranchers—cowboys—who belonged to Abel; but these have now been ousted by the cultivator.

Nomadism is being chased out of its last refuges, even in Africa, even in Arabia. Abel is really dead this time, or he is giving his last kick in Palestine.

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I cannot think that Zionism has a great future. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." But Jerusalem is a Christian and Moslem city, and the new city of Haifa, which already rivals it in size, is not a place to sentimentalize about.

The Jews can get on very well without a local centre. They have stood by the graves of all their oppressors in turn. They may say to Hitler, "the feet of them that buried the Spanish inquisitors are at the door, and shall carry thee out."

VIII

RUSSIA SEEN WITHOUT BLINKERS

It is rather late in the day to comment on a book which has gone through eight impressions in five months; but I have only just read it, and I suspect that in some quarters silence has been kept deliberately. Andrew Smith's story of his three years in Russia from 1932 to 1935 ought to be printed in a cheap edition, so that everyone who wishes to know the truth about that country may read it. My copy was sent to me by that excellent society the Right Book Club.

Andrew Smith is an American Communist, who was very active in the councils of the party. He was completely bamboozled by the propagandists who told him that Russia was a workman's paradise, and in 1929 visited the country, fired with enthusiasm, as a member of a labour delegation.

The delegates were treated like princes, fed luxuriously, and fooled to the top of their bent. They returned with glowing accounts of the plenty and happiness which they had found in the Communist republic. Three years later Smith threw up his work in America, "donated" his life's savings—nearly a thousand pounds—to the party, and went to live in the earthly paradise, accompanied by his Hungarian wife.

He was then forty-eight years old. Fortunately for himself he retained his American citizenship ; otherwise he would certainly not have been allowed to leave Russia alive.

“That the truth about Russia has not been disclosed is due in part to well-organized propaganda machinery and in part to the misguided activities of gullible individuals who, without a knowledge of the language, have accepted blindly the accounts of the official bureaucracy and the pleasant scenes which have been carefully staged for their benefit. . . . The most abject misery of the great mass of the Russian people aroused our intense dissatisfaction and moved us to the resolve that we would spare no effort to disclose the actual situation.”

The author gives an amusing account of the questions about hours of labour, wages and prices, which he heard asked by a foreign delegate, and the way in which the interpreter falsified every answer. The window dressing has been very clever, but the visitors to Russia and others have added a vast amount of deliberate lying.

It is a unique record which could have been written only by one who as an enthusiastic Socialist was allowed to see everything, and who in three years acquired a thorough knowledge of the language. The book is not anti-Socialist propaganda ; far from it. Mr. Smith was disgusted because he did not find social justice in Russia, but he does not seem to have ceased to be a Socialist.

I will not describe the hideous state of things which he and his wife found; the book itself must be read. But the page which narrates their final release speaks volumes. On the journey no one dared to speak; the train was like a graveyard. But "as soon as we crossed the border it was as if we had suddenly been released from some dark terrifying jail into the bright golden sunlight. The passengers broke into lively conversation and ecstatic cries of joy and freedom. They laughed, they cried, they sang. 'It is like going from hell to heaven, Andrew,' said my wife. For the first time in three years we saw working people clean, well dressed, and well fed."

I have read all the apparently honest books about Russia that I could get hold of, and much of what Smith says was not new to me. But certain things in his book surprised me.

He speaks of a continuous shortage of food all the three years that he was there, and confirms the account of the deliberate destruction by hunger of the peasantry of the Ukraine, whose food was taken from them by the officials. From four to six millions perished. But is there not more food in the country now? Other visitors have not noticed the emaciated looks of the workers and their families, and the Red army is certainly well looked after.

Several visitors have spoken of the enthusiasm for Stalin and his régime among the town population. Smith observed none at all, but only a terrified

repetition of laudatory phrases which all have to learn by rote. Attendance at mass meetings is practically compulsory. It is not likely that there is less dissatisfaction now than three years ago.

We had been led to suppose that the bureaucrats in Russia are very poorly paid and live with commendable simplicity. Smith found the OGPU men and their women wallowing in luxury, with servants, expensive cars, and every conceivable indulgence. In particular, all the young women in Russia have to consent to whatever the privileged class require from them. The evidence here is painful and hardly quotable.

Smith says nothing about the spread of education since the revolution, and this omission seems hardly fair. It is no great privilege to read the *Pravda*, and the index of prohibited books is much more drastic than the Roman; but twenty years ago the majority of Russians could not read at all.

I had been told that the Soviet Government cooks its population statistics, and this book strongly confirms this suspicion. The conditions described are incompatible with a low death-rate.

The picture is very horrible, and we need not restrain our indignation against those who praise such a system. But one question must be asked. How far do these miseries follow from State Socialism as such, and how far are they the result of forcibly introducing into a semi-Asiatic country the obsolete economic theories of a Western revolutionist

who hatched them in England, a country totally different in structure from Russia?

I have never thought that State Socialism is necessarily unworkable; but Russia is not the country in which it could be tried with much hope of success. For the Russian is hopeless as an organizer. In Germany there might be no starvation, no tractors and other machinery rusting unused or damaged by incompetence; the bureaucracy would be efficient and perhaps unbribable. But the cruelty and terrorism would be almost as bad as they are in Russia. Already, spies and provocative agents are everywhere, as they are in Russia. There is no freedom of speech, of writing, or of public meeting, and the livelihood of every man is at the mercy of some official, as Smith found in Russia.

"Socialism means slavery, and the slavery will not be mild." So Herbert Spencer wrote long ago, and I think he has been proved to be right.

"Among barbarians," said a Greek poet, "all are slaves except one." We may be sorry for the slave, but he can hardly be an upright and self-respecting man. Sycophancy, informing, lying, and mean-spiritedness are almost forced upon him. How very little of permanent value in art or literature has been produced under a despotism!

Even science, which can be allowed more freedom, is partially crippled. Intellectual life of all kinds withers under such conditions. "God takes

away half a man's worth," says Homer, "when he makes him a slave."

The new feature in Russia, since Andrew Smith returned to his own country, is the terrorism exercised over the higher officials, none of whom can think himself safe. We know what happened when Robespierre began to hurry off his colleagues to the guillotine. Will that be the end of Stalin, and is there a young Napoleon preparing for a meteoric career on the battlefield?

It would be very rash to prophesy. Russia is not Europe, and there have been no close historical parallels anywhere. After reading Smith's book I am less inclined to believe that we are in for a new period of "wars of religion." Communism as a religion seems to be confined to those who read its sacred books and swallow all the lies which they hear about its virtues. Can it be said to have existed anywhere, except in the monasteries, and perhaps in the Peru of the Incas?

ENGLAND

I

THE ENGLISH HOME

IN 1872 Amiel, after taking tea with an English family at Geneva, writes in his famous diary: "These English homes are very pleasing. They are the result of a long civilization and an ideal followed with perseverance. Everyone and everything is in its place. The little world is governed and seems to go along by itself; the genius of the place is duty with that shade of reserve and self-mastery which is the English colouring.

"The children give the measure of this domestic system; they are happy, smiling, trustful, and yet discreet. In every English house one feels that the home is a citadel."

Such was a typical Victorian home, as seen by a very intelligent observer. Many of us old people have almost sacred recollections of such homes as he describes.

And yet we are now informed that in those days the head of the family was a tyrant and a bully, his wife a crushed and submissive drudge, and as for the daughters, they would not have dared to ask to borrow a latchkey.

All this may have been true at the time of *The Fairchild Family*, but my recollections do not go back so far. I am guiltily conscious that my own early

training was in all respects far better than that which in our busy London life we were able to give to our children.

A recent writer, Dr. Routh, without dispraising the Victorian home, thinks that our cherished tradition that ours is pre-eminently the country of home life is not in accordance with fact. The French have a stronger sense of family solidarity, a more abiding devotion to their mothers than we have.

Until the middle of the last century the Englishman was not a home bird. His wife was; she could not help it. Her house was a domestic workshop and nursery. She baked, brewed, cooked, sewed, mended and, above all, she had to tend a troop of ailing, squalling children—a dismal procession of cradles and coffins—that charming state of society which Sir Leo Chiozza Money wants to revive by State bribery. In these circumstances the man was better out of the way, and he thought so himself.

When his day's work was done—I am thinking mainly of the middle class—the eighteenth-century Londoner met his friends at a "coffee-house," an institution which sprang up in the seventeenth century, where the new hot drinks could be "tasted" and the more potent liquors imbibed without stint.

Political, literary and miscellaneous topics were discussed, and in some of the best of these houses the art of conversation was carried to great perfection.

The coffee-house was the parent of the club, which

came into existence when the society at the coffee-house became too promiscuous. Dr. Johnson's "The Club," to which it is still a coveted privilege to belong, was an early example. How good the talk there was we can gather from Boswell.

Soon after Waterloo sumptuous club houses began to be built—the United Service Club as early as 1819.

But soon after that date the Victorian tradition began. The men spent more time at home and took their duties as parents seriously—too seriously sometimes. In the evening the family were together.

A great feature of this period was the round table of rosewood, a beautiful thing in itself, as we are beginning once more to realize, and suitable for the round games which were then so popular. The daughters would exhibit their "parlour tricks" at the piano or with some other instrument, or some book was read aloud—a delightful habit which not only enables the whole family to share in the same intellectual pleasure, but helps greatly to the enjoyment of good literature, since it prevents us from reading too fast.

Poetry ought always to be read aloud, as it used to be. When St. Augustine found St. Ambrose reading to himself silently, he was surprised, and thought he must be doing it to spare his voice.

Most of Shakespeare's plays and Walter Scott's novels were read aloud to us, while we sat round the table and "did copy-drawing." The ladies of

this period often made art needlework of great beauty; I think this is beginning to come back into favour.

No doubt the parents hoped for some return for their lavish expenditure of time—of time more than money—on their children. They looked forward to an old age either brightened by their companionship or cheered by their success in life. Sometimes they were disappointed; sometimes the family was completely dispersed and the young people found home boring; but children are not always ungrateful, and the old folks often reaped the reward which they had deserved.

In those days of “individualism”—though a flood of nonsense rages round that word—and keen competition the business man often looked to his home as a refuge from this ugly side of life. For the family is the natural communistic unit, and for this reason it is the enemy of those who wish to establish a non-natural communism, based on hatred instead of love.

Some fathers may excuse their own acquisitiveness by saying that they do it all for their children; but what can be more beautiful than the affectionate care of the fathers of John Ruskin and Robert Browning and others whom we could name to give their brilliant sons an opportunity of making the best of their talents?

The changes which have partially broken up the home are not all to be regretted. Mass production

and small families have liberated the married woman, though it would be a mistake to suppose that she is necessarily better educated or happier than her grandmother. Rushing about does not improve the mind. And it must be admitted that in the last century there were too many daughters who were allowed to sacrifice their own happiness to the supposed duty of looking after their parents.

Since the war other causes are destroying the middle-class home. Incomes fall, taxes rise, no servants can be found; and so the country-house and the small house in the country lose their attractiveness, and the tiny flat or the bungalow afford cramped accommodation for two or three persons only. The lack of servants is the most harassing of these cases.

Personally, I think the prejudice against this honourable profession, a prejudice which is said to be encouraged by school teachers, who are becoming a dangerous class, will not be permanent. I was greatly surprised to find from official statistics that there were many more domestic servants in 1931 than in 1921. The increase must be entirely in single servant households, where the conditions are much less agreeable than in larger houses.

These changes, however, affect only a minority of the population. The working man's home, so far from breaking up, becomes more homelike and comfortable every year. It is not in this class that matrimonial scandals are common. Drunkenness,

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which used to cause so much misery, is no longer a national vice.

The average Englishman still prefers to have a little house of his own, preferably with a plot of garden, and this is still a real home for him and his wife and children. It is a mistake to judge of England only by those who are snapshotted in the society papers.

II

BENEATH THE FINE CLOTHES

I WONDER whether any of the spectators at the Coronation were indiscreet enough to think of a certain page in *Sartor Resartus*—one of the great books of the world, whether our young people read it or not.

“When I read of pompous ceremonials, and I strive, in my remote privacy, to form a clear picture of that solemnity, on a sudden, as if by some enchanter’s wand, the (shall I speak it?) the clothes fly off the whole diplomatic corps, and dukes, grandees, bishops, generals, the Anointed Presence itself, every mother’s son of them, stand straddling there, not a shirt on them; and I know not whether to laugh or weep. . . .

“Lives there a man that can figure a naked Duke of Windlestraw addressing a naked House of Lords? And yet was not every soul, or rather every body, of these guardians of our liberties, naked, or nearly so, last night?”

An X-ray pair of eyes would certainly be inconvenient, if not indecent. Besides, where are we to stop in our search for the authentic man? Not at the skin, not even at the bones; and if we probe still further in the hope of finding a soul, we may fare like the man who tried to peel an onion.

If such inappropriate thoughts crossed the minds of any who were privileged to be present on May 12th, they no doubt kept them to themselves as carefully as the courtiers in Hans Andersen's story of the Emperor's New Clothes. People who can see too far below the surface are out of place in the majority of official positions.

Carlyle was no enemy of ceremonial, though he cared little for it. He was not like a certain graceless politician who described the nation's rejoicings as "all bunting and bunkum." But he had learned from Goethe that "all that is transitory is only a symbol," and that the whole external world, which is being woven on "the whirring loom of time," is only the garment in which we see the work and thought of its Creator.

He was in revolt against the prosaic rationalism of the eighteenth century, which in his opinion was blind to the beauty and mystery of the world. These writers—Hume and Paley for example—did not lift the veil which covers the real world; they thought the veil was reality. He had learned from the Germans, from Goethe and Fichte, that the world is a living mystical fabric, the clothing of the Divine; he wished to penetrate beneath types and shadows to the reality beneath.

It is a pity that he had so much faith in intuition that he despised metaphysics and neglected natural science, which in his time was making great strides and beginning to influence all serious thought. He

is a little too much inclined to regard time and space as mere "clothes," illusions, instead of learning from Kant that they are the forms under which we must receive all that our senses tell us about the world. But no one can read *Sartor Resartus* without having his thoughts widened and deepened.

The true mystic does not despise the semi-transparent curtains beyond which he hopes one day to pass. One of the wisest aphorisms that I know was spoken by the Quaker, Isaac Pennington. "Every truth is shadow except the last; but every truth is substance in its own place, though it be but a shadow in another place; and the shadow is a true shadow, as the substance is a true substance."

All life is sacramental, in various degrees; a sacramental half conceals and half reveals the spiritual truth of which it is the outward sign. "The beginning of wisdom," says Carlyle, "is to look fixedly on clothes, or even with armed eyesight, till they become transparent."

"What is man himself, and his whole terrestrial life, but an emblem, a visible garment for that divine Me of his, cast hither like a light-particle down from heaven?"

The notion that the body is the clothing of the soul is very old, and is the prevailing philosophy of India. When the clothing wears out, shall not the soul provide itself with a new coat?

Christians have sometimes dallied with the idea of reincarnation, which in some moods we find so

attractive that we almost wish it had been sanctioned by the Church.

The following lines are a translation, by Sir Edwin Arnold, from the famous Indian poem, the *Bhagavad-gita*:

Nay, but as when one layeth
His worn-out robes away,
And taking new ones sayeth,
These will I wear to-day;
So putteth by the spirit
Lightly its garb of flesh,
And passeth to inherit
A residence afresh.

Sartor Resartus has tempted me further into philosophy than I meant to go. It was the Coronation and Carlyle's quaint fancy about such pageantry that suggested these thoughts.

Are not human beings divided into two classes? There are the natural mystics, who like to find symbols of eternity in things temporal, of the unseen in things seen, of the spiritual in the corporeal; and there are others who are not content without translating the higher into the lower, and dramatizing all their higher experiences.

The Quakers, who are the typical mystics within Christianity, perform no sacramental rites because all life is for them sacramental. They prefer to worship in silence in an unadorned barn of a chapel. They dislike conventional forms of courtesy, such as removing the hat. They dress all alike, in the

plainest possible manner. They object to legal forms, such as taking an oath before a magistrate.

On the other hand there are those who like to dramatize everything. It is to please them, who are in a large majority, that the King, who has reigned without dispute for several months, submits to be ceremonially crowned with all the pomp that a wealthy nation can devise. It is to please them that divine service is made theatrical, with gorgeously arrayed priests.

A *nouveau riche* does not feel quite sure that he has made a large fortune till he has built an absurdly large house, and covered his wife with pearls and diamonds. Bismarck in 1871 surrenders the fortress of Belfort in return for the childish pleasure of wounding the feelings of the French by marching his troops through the streets of Paris.

This is the opposite kind of symbolism to that which appeals to the mystic. Success is not complete unless we have something very tangible to show for it.

Both types are natural, and neither is laudable if carried to an extreme. The mystic is apt to forget that we were sent into the world not only to understand its deeper meaning, but to do and be something in it. The Quakers are thoroughly sane mystics, but it is not an accident that their children so often revolt against a scheme of living which seems to them drab and colourless. Why the young Quakers, whose families have long been patterns of

the bourgeois virtues, should now be very pink in politics I do not know; but the reaction is a fact.

On the other side, there is the obvious danger that the outward show may be valued for its own sake. Snobbery and vulgarity thus appear, and all the empty shams which Carlyle is so fond of holding up to scorn.

There would be something childish in our love of processions and ceremonial if we were not saved by our sense of humour. The Lord Mayor's show is frankly comic, and in more serious functions we watch the actors with a good humour which is very far from grovelling servility.

Most of us did see beneath the fine clothes on May 12th, but what we saw was not human beings *in puris naturalibus*, but the thousand years old history of a great nation, once more bringing its hopes and fears, its pride and penitence, into the presence of Him who has been, and is, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come.

III

THE ENGLISH COUNTRY HOUSE

I HAVE been reading again two admirable novels—*Two Families*, by Archibald Marshall, and *As We Are*, by E. F. Benson. Both deal with social changes, following the fortunes of a typical English country house and its occupants. Archibald Marshall tells us the story of the decline and fall of a county family between 1860 and 1920, and of the parallel rise of a capable and ambitious working-class family, who began as labourers and ended as wealthy contractors, like the Cubitts. One family goes up, the other down, till they change places.

In future years, says the author, the “Abels” will be considered as good as the “Blakes” had ever been. Here he is mistaken; “founding families” is gone for ever. Marshall lived by preference in the England of Anthony Trollope; that is one of his charms for those who sigh for the comfortable days before the war; he remained a Victorian.

Benson’s novel—I think it is his masterpiece—is more up to date. His parable house is one of the stately homes of England, and its noble owners are not driven out of it by taxation. But when the old earl dies, heartbroken by a matrimonial scandal in his family which, as he thinks, has brought disgrace upon an honourable name, his son and the divorcée

whom he has married refuse to live in it, and the mansion is broken up, to be turned into a country club.

This is what is happening all over the country. It is not only, perhaps not even chiefly, a question of money. When a great house like Benson's "Hak-luyts" comes into the market it is no longer snapped up by a profiteer. The wife of the owner of a famous mansion told me the other day that they were wishing to sell it, and consulted a London agent, who said almost brutally, "You will be lucky if you get five thousand pounds for this place."

In Ralph Dutton's excellent book, *The English Country House*, in the Batsford series, the writer of the preface says that public interest in these houses is beginning to be felt just when they are doomed. How many large houses, he asks, will still be in private ownership fifty years hence?

A few of these splendid monuments of the pride and fine taste of oligarchic England will no doubt be preserved as national monuments. The rest will fall into ruins like the medieval castles which in spite of their beauty and historical interest are strangely neglected by the modern sightseer.

Some of the old families are determined to live in the old home, or in a corner of it, as long as they can. It is most natural but rather pathetic; for the life has gone out of the great house.

While its owner was a magnate, the ruler of a tiny kingdom, it was right, or seemed so, that he

should live spaciously ; he fulfilled a function in the national life, and on the whole deserved well of his country. But now he is just a rich man, and often not even that. To keep up an empty state as a member of a leisured class is an intolerable bore, and, as is now increasingly felt, not a very worthy way of living.

The mania for ostentatious building began as soon as private houses ceased to be fortified. The Renaissance monarchs—"benevolent despots"—set the pace. Our country could not quite compete with Versailles and the Escorial, but Charles II planned a creditable copy of Versailles at Winchester.

These insane palaces, with about a thousand rooms, continued to be built in Russia till the revolution, and I believe some of the native princes in India still build them. They depend, of course, on unlimited supplies of cheap labour. Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Henry Ford are richer than any English duke, but there are no Chatsworths or Woburns in the United States.

"Why did you build yourself a house like this?" said Henry VIII to Wolsey at Hampton Court. "That I might have something worthy to offer to my sovereign," replied the trembling Cardinal. "Thanks, I will have it," said the King in effect.

Probably the largest private house in England was Audley End ; it is still magnificent after two-thirds of it have been pulled down. In 1690 a young Lord Stawell set about building a house four hundred feet

long and a hundred feet wide; but it was never finished. The most beautiful country houses, like The Vyne in Hampshire, and Compton Wynyates in Warwickshire, are of moderate size; it is houses like these which we may hope will be preserved somehow.

Of the very large structures some, like Montacute, and Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire ("more glass than wall") are architecturally almost perfect; but others, like Blenheim and Castle Howard and Stowe and Wentworth Woodhouse, are too deliberately ostentatious; it is whispered that some of them are not even comfortable to live in.

The craze was not extinct even in what the French call the era of bad taste. Beckford's Fonthill, a Gothic Abbey (so he called it), a cruciform building 312 feet by 250, with a tower 278 feet high, was designed by the egregious James Wyatt, whose heavy hand was laid on several of our cathedrals. It had a short life and a merry one, for the tower fell, and after an existence of only twenty-five years Fonthill was allowed to disappear. But another masterpiece of Wyatt and his nephew, Wyattville, survives in Ashridge Park, a triumph of pretentious vulgarity now turned into a college, and famous for conservatism and rhododendrons.

The abandonment of ostentation has been gradual, hurried on, like other changes, by the war. There was a time, not so very long ago, when a man's position depended largely on the size of his house

and the number of his servants. "Man is the only animal," said Bernard Shaw, "which prides itself on the number of its parasites." A visitor to Freshwater asked a native whether Tennyson did not live near there. "Yes, there is a Mr. Tennyson who lives there." "But he is a great man, is he not?" "Oh, no, he is not a great man. He only keeps one manservant, and he does not sleep in the house."

I suppose this kind of snobbishness culminated in the reign of Edward VII. I do not think there is very much of it now, though there may be plutocratic cliques of whom I fortunately know nothing. The richest man of my acquaintance has, I believe, three young maidservants in his house, and no butler or footman.

Of course the servant problem, which turns our wives' hair prematurely grey, is at the bottom of the change in our habits. Young couples in their thousands are driven to bungalows and childlessness. No other cause has so much to do with the fall in the birthrate, both at home and in the Dominions. There ought to be a remedy, for domestic service is a well-paid and honourable profession, and a well-bred mistress is much more polite and considerate than a foreman in a factory. There is a plethora of young women in the poorer professional class who want jobs and cannot get them. All that is needed, it seems to me, is to break down a snobbish prejudice.

Do I regret the doom of the English country house? Yes, I do. This would be a dismal country

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to live in if its inhabitants were all turned out on the same pattern. I am writing this in one of the grandest of our old episcopal palaces. My host may not find it very comfortable, but what of that? It is his business to be magnificent, not to be comfortable. I feel this strongly, as I am not a bishop myself.

IV

LONDON

I WONDER what the tens of thousands of foreigners and overseas visitors who are coming for the Coronation will think of the capital of the British Empire.

We need not wonder what they will think of the country in May, for there is no land in the world more charming than England in the later spring, when the green leaves are fresh, the fields golden with buttercups, and the fruit trees in bloom. But how will London strike them if they have seen the finest foreign cities, such as Paris, Florence, New York, and Vienna?

Not long ago I wrote an article called "The London Jumble," and called attention to the absolute want of planning in London. It is too amorphous even to be monotonous, an assemblage of towns rather than a great city. Like most other things with us, it was not made; it grew.

It is, as I said, the urban centre of a people of country-lovers, who are not sufficiently interested in their metropolis to take pride in making it magnificent or beautiful.

That, I think, is a common opinion. But now comes a delightful Danish writer, Mr. Rasmussen, who knows London from end to end, sincerely

admires the place and its inhabitants, and wishes to help his countrymen to admire London too.

But his book was hardly published in Danish before it occurred to him that there was something else which he might do—namely, teach Londoners themselves to appreciate their own city. So he has translated his book (*London*, Jonathan Cape); four hundred pages with scores of excellent photographs.

I confess that, though I lived in London for twenty-five years, I never realized, till I read this book, how almost every street contributes something to the story of a great nation which has developed on its own lines, quite unique and unlike the history of continental capitals. This, and not mere architectural criticism, of which there is no lack in English, is the strong point in Rasmussen's book.

The history of the London that we know, in brick, stone, and plaster, begins with the rebuilding after the Great Fire. What it looked like in the later Middle Ages we may see from Brewer's architectural drawings. It was like other great towns of the period, crowded and malodorous, but exquisitely beautiful, with its picturesque timber houses projecting over the narrow streets, and its forest of church spires. It was most beautiful before Henry VIII laid hands on the monasteries, and before the great spire of Old St. Paul's, five hundred feet in height, fell in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and was never rebuilt.

How was London to be rebuilt? The favourite town plan was that the streets should radiate like the spokes of a wheel from some centre. A famous example is in Rome, where three long straight streets converge upon the Piazza del Popolo. A more modern example is at Washington. This was what Wren wished to do; St. Paul's was to be the centre of the city. This plan might have been carried out under an absolute monarchy; it was quite impossible in London, which was self-governing and independent of the Crown.

The King at first "signified his pleasure" to the Lord Mayor that no rebuilding should be begun without leave, since the King has before him "certain models for re-edifying the city with more decency and conveniency than formerly." But in a few days he climbs down, and is content to forbid wooden houses, and to widen the "eminent and notorious streets." For the most part, houses were re-erected where they had stood before.

The book contains a picture of the colossal palace which Wren designed for Charles II at Winchester, modelled on Versailles, and not much smaller. This huge and tasteless structure would not have enhanced Sir Christopher's reputation.

We are reminded that the famous London squares are almost unique, and that some of them, like Bedford-square, are very beautiful. They were laid out by great landowners, who meant the square to be inhabited by families of much the same social

position, and gave them a garden in common. The first was Covent Garden "piazza," about 1630, with its very handsome church and arcades, as in the Place Royale in Paris, built about twenty years earlier.

Another unique feature of London is the parks. There are many parks in continental cities, laid out, as foreigners believe, in the English style. The essential thing was to replace the straight lines of a French garden by curved lines. Curved roads, dividing patches of lawn, with a few shrubberies and trees—this is called an English park.

But the typical London park is a broad expanse of grass, with roads or paths round it. It is meant to recall not a formal garden but a country park.

Very few of us have seen plans of a great London house, like those of one in Grosvenor-square, built in 1886. The depth is six times the breadth of the unimposing front. There are six storeys, including the basement, twenty bedrooms, and such a labyrinth of rooms for the chef, the cook, the butler, the valet, the housekeeper, the coachman, the governess, etc., as we humbler folk have never dreamed of. This kind of house will soon be as obsolete as a feudal castle.

There are some peculiarities in our houses which strike every foreigner. Continental architects always ask how we make sash-windows fit. Mr. Rasmussen, who likes to poke fun at us, says the point is that they don't fit. The Englishman likes to hear his

windows rattle and to feel a gentle breeze of cold air on his neck.

English children are taught that windows were made to open, doors to shut. The rich man on the continent likes a suite of rooms opening into each other. We like each room to be self-contained, and to have one door always shut. In America there are often no doors at all between the rooms. The windows are not opened, and the whole house is kept at a uniform, stifling heat. We suffer severely in America; so do the Americans in England. "It seems to me," said an American to me, "that you ice your houses and warm your drinks."

But Mr. Rasmussen addresses us with a purpose. Are we really going to give up our sensible and thoroughly English custom of small cottages, each for one family, and build towering piles of flats? These are no remedy for overcrowding—very much the other way.

We are beginning to spoil our unique city by introducing a mode of building which good judges on the continent are now convinced is very inferior to the English way. "Only the follies seem to be international. It is a tragedy not only for England, but for the world in general, that England should abandon her national traditions. The inhabitants of London are utterly unconscious of the significance of their city in Europe."

The town of the future will be simply a place where men can live under the best conditions. The

houses will be modest but there will be no home without a garden, and no town without playgrounds and playing-fields. The new garden-cities, he thinks, are on the right lines, and a great extension of these enterprises may be hoped for.

One new experiment, he hears, is very popular—an unfenced strip of lawn in front of the houses. This has long been a feature in American villages, where there is no tradition of fencing in private property.

When I was in America, nothing pleased me more than the old villages in Connecticut, most of them on the same plan. There was an avenue of American elms, unfamiliar trees to us, growing in a sherry-glass shape. Behind these were broad, undivided strips of grass, and behind these the detached "frame" houses.

I have not done justice to one of the best books about London that I have seen. I hope our town-planners will take note and stop spoiling a city of which the author thinks we ought to be prouder than we are.

THE EMPIRE NEEDS PURITANS

My address to the overseas delegates at Winchester has been so widely commented on in the Press that the subject is evidently thought to be interesting. The criticisms which I have seen have been friendly and sympathetic.

I do not approve of political sermons; but this seemed to be a unique opportunity to ask our own people and our visitors to join in considering whether there are any moral causes for a state of things which must make every patriot uneasy.

About fifty years ago (I do not remember the exact date) Sir John Seeley's *Expansion of England* was read by everybody. The expansion was indeed a wonderful thing.

Our little island, seething with energy, had sent out millions of colonists to fill, with inhabitants of our own flesh and blood, the vast empty spaces which we had staked out for our prosperity. We looked forward to seeing Britains beyond the seas, richer, happier, and more populous than the home country. We had an opportunity which, in the nature of things, can never be given again to any country.

It was an amazing piece of good fortune which, if properly used, would ensure for many ages to

come the preponderance of the English-speaking race in the civilized world.

Fortune (or, as we liked to say, Providence) gave us this splendid opportunity, and I fear we are throwing it away. All over the world our race is losing ground. Our birth-rate is the lowest in Europe, except that of Sweden. We are burdened with the support of a great army of unemployed, and yet we cannot keep out the Southern Irish, who hate our nation, our Government, and our religion, because they will do rough work which Englishmen refuse to touch.

Emigration has entirely ceased; our people will not go, and the Dominions do not want them. There is no country in the world where the British workman, such as the trade unions and politicians have made him, is welcome. In Canada notices have been seen, "No British need apply." It begins to be questionable whether from the economic point of view we have any survival value.

The same complaints are made in the United States, where Madison Grant's *The Passing of a Great Race*, a purposely alarmist book, was intended to frighten public opinion.

It is no use to say that the Dominions cannot receive immigrants because many of their own people are out of work. It is no use to say that half of Canada is too cold and half of Australia too dry for colonization. Make any deductions you like, it is still absurd that the population of England per

square mile is 750, of Canada 3, of Australia 2. The maldistribution of population is grotesque.

The mischief is that we no longer breed pioneers. We have all got "the wage habit" and many other habits, too, which can only be gratified in the great towns, which in Australia as in England absorb far too large a fraction of the population.

And now we have our most distinguished economists—men like Sir Arthur Salter, Sir George Schuster, and Mr. Keynes—telling us that the remedy for our troubles is increased consumption. Multiply wants and the means of satisfying them and the world will go round merrily.

To me this sounds like the fabulous island where the inhabitants lived by taking in each other's washing. At any rate, these were not the maxims which made England great. Hard work, plain living, and thrift made our country the workshop of the world.

One of my critics objects that in the last century men worked hard, and filled the emigrant ships, because they could not help it; needs must when the devil drives. I do not deny it; I am neither praising them nor blaming my own contemporaries. I merely point out that in Victoria's reign the Empire was a going concern, now it is in danger of being a gone concern.

Besides, it is not true that it was only compulsion which drove us to expand. There was far more idealism in that grim and grimy England than it is

fashionable to allow. Carlyle was thundering out his gospel of work—"Produce, produce something, in heaven's name." Clough was writing: "Go from the East to the West, as the sun and the stars direct thee. With the great girdle of God go and encompass the earth." Children were brought up on Kingsley's *Water Babies*, describing the awful fate of the Do-as-you-likes, who left the land of Hardwork for the land of Readymade.

Is it really so certain that the future belongs to the high-standard nations? Would any English-speaking nation dare to admit Chinese or Japanese or Indians in large numbers?

Soon after the war a Japanese gentleman called upon me and asked me whether I was in favour of the League of Nations and universal disarmament. I said that I was.

"Well, then," he said, "if we were to disarm and join the League, should we be allowed to settle in California and Australia?"

"I am afraid you certainly would not."

"We should be kept out by force, as we are now."

"Yes."

"Then why should we disarm and join the League?"

I had no answer.

Our "consumptionist" economists know their own subject better than I do; but none the less I believe they are wrong. From the moral point of view, I feel sure they are wrong. To multiply wants is not

the way to be wise or happy. Whatever makes life more artificial makes it more precarious; the man with many wants is never independent.

The Christian life is not ascetic in the sense which we give to the word. But we are to live in fairly hard training, like soldiers on a campaign or athletes competing in a race. "Thou, therefore, take thy share of hardship, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

This is what I meant by "Back to Puritanism." I cannot think of any nations which have ruined themselves by self-indulgence; but it is easy to find examples of families and classes which have done so. We need not take too tragic a view of our national character when we remember how we acquitted ourselves in the Great War. There was no softness then.

But the danger exists—a danger lest the nation which "speaks the tongue that Shakespeare spake, the faith and morals hold that Milton held," may from slackness and want of spirit throw away the most splendid opportunity ever offered to man, and relapse into a condition more in accordance with the narrow bounds of our island home than with the pride of an Empire which comprises one quarter of the surface of the habitable globe, and one quarter of its inhabitants.

I shall be called a croaker for this; but I think I have spoken the truth. Bernard Shaw once called me a Quaker at heart. Perhaps I am; there are many worse things to be.

RELIGION

I

A REPORT ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

THE Report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine has attracted much attention.

The Report is not an official pronouncement of the Church of England. It is laid before the Bishops as the considered opinion of a group of representative churchmen, appointed by the Archbishops fifteen years ago.

The members of the Commission were selected as young and rising men in 1922. Now they are in the prime of life, and many of them are no longer rising, but risen. Old Victorians like myself are not represented.

The lay public, who do not realize how much water has flowed under the bridge since Queen Victoria died, were startled to find what opinions are recorded without censure as held by some of the Commission. It must be remembered that the Commission disclaims any judicial attitude, and that the Report naturally avoids branding as heretical opinions held by some of its members. There was to be no minority Report.

Nevertheless, the document will be of great historical interest, as showing what opinions representative churchmen were willing to avow, after long deliberation, in 1937. The Modern Church-

men's Union has very little left to fight about. Our occupation is gone.

The chief points which have quite rightly attracted attention are as follows:

(1) "The tradition of the inerrancy of the Bible commonly held in the Church until the beginning of the nineteenth century cannot be maintained in the light of the knowledge now at our disposal."

The belief in verbal inspiration was commonly held much later than this. I was taught to believe it, though I was brought up in an Anglo-Catholic home, where the Church was more talked about than the Bible.

When I went up to Cambridge in 1879, I heard that Professor Westcott had pronounced that "history begins with Abraham." This was thought rather bold. A few years later Charles Gore got into trouble with the older members of his party by making a few cautious concessions to Biblical criticism.

Now the whole fortress has capitulated. The Book of Daniel was written in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. The Fourth Gospel is the work of an unknown Christian mystic about A.D. 110. 2 Peter and Jude are second-century forgeries. A clergyman may say these things in the presence of his bishop.

(2) "The view that creation is an eternal process . . . is now held by many Christian thinkers." I agree; but this was one of the few

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Platonic doctrines which the Church sternly refused to accept.

(3) On the question of evil spirits, "it is legitimate for a Christian to interpret the language, whether of Scripture or of the Church's liturgy, in a purely symbolical sense." In other words, when Christ spoke of Satan, He may only have "shared the current beliefs of His time." There may be no such being.

Well, the sentimental humanitarianism of our time will not be denied; it has driven the Commission to play with undoubted heresies, both here and in discussing the future life. But I recall the sayings of some very wise men. "Through strife all things arise and pass away." "Life is an attunement of opposite tensions, like that of the bow and the lyre" (Heraclitus), "Without contraries there is no progression" (Blake). Abolish hell, and heaven grows dim and doubtful. Banish Satan, and the vision of God begins to fade.

(4) On the question of nature-miracles the genial chairman, the Archbishop of York, takes fright, and "repudiates with vehemence" the opinion that "it is more congruous with the wisdom and majesty of God that He should never vary the regularities of Nature." But some members of the Commission do hold this opinion, and were not to be moved from it. They point out that "the use of miracles to force belief appears to have been deliberately rejected by our Lord."

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There is no question on which the strategic retreat of the defenders of tradition has been more precipitate than this. Bishop Gore unfrocked at least one of his clergy for not believing in the Virgin Birth of Christ. Now the Commission "recognizes that the negative views outlined above are held by members of the Church, as of the Commission, who fully accept the reality of our Lord's Incarnation, which is the central truth of the Christian faith."

The "empty tomb" is in the same position as the Virgin Birth. The resuscitation of the crucified body of Christ was of course the first stage in the ascension into heaven, of which the Commission reports that "its physical features are to be interpreted symbolically, since they are closely related to the conception of heaven as a place locally fixed beyond the sky."

I once had an indignant letter from Bishop Gore, because I said I was glad that he did not believe in a local heaven. He protested that this statement would injure his reputation; he had only said that we need not believe in a heaven "above our heads." But I suppose he knew that the earth rotates?

Our old friend the Rationalist Society, a quaint Victorian survival, still thinks that religion, which had its origin in the duplicity of the first knave and the simplicity of the first fool, has been driven from pillar to post by the inexorable march of

Science, and is now supported only by a few hypocrites like myself.

They are quite mistaken. The materialism (he disliked the word) of T. H. Huxley, who has been lately described as "a curious mixture of Israelitish prophet, nineteenth-century journalist, and modern preacher," is out of date. The biologists are most of them still unconvinced, and "dialectical materialism" is the official creed of Soviet Russia; but our astronomers and physicists, such as the famous writers, Jeans and Eddington, are theists who dally with Berkeleyan idealism.

It is a peculiarity of theological architecture that its foundations are ingeniously supported by the superstructure. In reality, religious faith does not rest upon miracles, which, as a moment's reflection will show, do not *prove* any of the doctrines in which religion is interested. But belief in miracles is, or has been till recently, a normal product of faith. "Miracle is faith's dearest child," as a German writer says.

This is a reason for treating traditional dogmas with great respect; it is not a reason for making them carry a weight which they cannot bear. There are, as the Commission says, many persons who are firmly convinced of the central truths of Christianity, but dislike the idea of intercalating "acts of God" among the processes of nature.

(5) Questions about the future state involve the terribly difficult philosophical problem of the rela-

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tion of time to eternity, and the Commission refuses to touch philosophical problems. Some of the members, on humanitarian grounds, wish to believe either that all men will be saved at the last, or that the reprobates are not punished but annihilated. These ideas are formally heretical and philosophically objectionable; but they are popular.

I repeat that this Report will have a great historical interest. It marks the position of King Canute's chair in the present year of grace.

II

ONE FLOCK—BUT NOT IN ONE FOLD

THE latest scheme for reunion—the result of a joint conference of representatives of the Church of England and some of the Free Churches—marks a progress in good will and good temper. It will, in my opinion, have no other effect.

Are National Churches and Free Churches a scandal to Christianity, as some hold? Romanists are fond of misquoting a verse in the Fourth Gospel, a prayer of Christ that His followers may be “one fold and one shepherd.”

He said nothing of the kind. He prayed that they may be “one flock,” not penned into one fold.

The Greek and Latin Churches agreed to part in the Middle Ages, just as the Roman Empire, some centuries earlier, split into a western and an eastern half. But for the Turkish conquest and the Russian Revolution, the Latin and the Greek Churches would be approximately equal in numbers and dignity.

But Rome cannot give up her claim to universal empire. Even Mussolini must strut and vapour like an heir of the Caesars.

In Western Europe this outrageous claim perpetuated itself in two forms. There was the Holy Roman Empire, which was neither holy nor

Roman nor an empire, and the Holy Roman Church, which was at any rate Roman. The former expired in 1806; the latter is still a flourishing body, one Church among many others.

The Reformation was not a reformation at all, but a revolution, which succeeded mainly in those countries which had never been conquered or effectively administered by the Romans. The real Reformation, a very partial one, was within the Roman Church, which at this time removed several abuses. It must be remembered that the Italian Renaissance, with all its splendid results in art and literature, paganized the Church in a way which horrified the northern Europeans. The Renaissance was crushed by Spanish fanaticism; but the split left the Roman Church more Latin than it was before.

The Church of England was a very adroit and very English compromise. It was intended to include all Catholics who would renounce the Pope and acknowledge Queen Elizabeth, and all Protestants who were not schismatics on principle. It was "established," recognized by the State as representing the nation on its religious side.

The compromise was accepted by the large majority of the nation, and worked well till the beginning of the nineteenth century. The extremists on both sides stood out; but the Church fairly represented the nation till the great Methodist secession, the result partly of the stiff parochial

organization, and partly of widening social cleavages. It might have been averted by better statesmanship.

Doctrinally, there is very little excuse for perpetuating disunion. The Established Church can find room for almost all. There has been much approximation in the forms of divine service. Some of the kirks in Scotland have a service almost indistinguishable from the Anglican; and some Anglican churches have introduced extempore prayers. The Churches all use each other's hymns, and co-operate in social and charitable activities.

The Scottish Church, however, separated from the English mainly on the question of episcopacy, and if anyone supposes that the Scottish ministers will consent to have episcopal hands laid upon them, he is very much mistaken.

What are the practical disadvantages of the present state of things?

In the mission field there is a possibility of unseemly rivalry, very confusing to the natives whom it is proposed to convert. Practically, I believe, the missions do not interfere with each other much.

At home there is much overlapping and waste of money. Four places of worship are half empty where two might be filled. There used to be bitter jealousies, exacerbated by social contempt on one side and angry indignation on the other.

This obstacle to reunion has almost disappeared with the progressive fusion of social classes. The

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Anglican bishop is no longer "standoffish," and the leading Nonconformist minister is sometimes quite pontifical.

Why then did I say that schemes for reunion will come to nothing? The insuperable obstacle is in the sincere convictions of the Anglo-Catholic party in our Church, which includes a large number of the clergy. The myth of the Apostolical Succession, which has no historical foundation, is still officially maintained. The Church of England will recognize the Swedish Lutheran Church, which has duly consecrated bishops, and of course the Greek Church, but not the German Lutherans, who, as I once heard the Kaiser say, were rather hurried at the Reformation.

I used to be taught that no important change in our formularies could be made except by an Ecumenical Council, which is very like saying that no Act of Parliament is valid until it has been ratified by the American Congress.

The Church Assembly passed an idiotic resolution that no one may vote for that august body who is a member of any other denomination as well as of the Church of England. This disfranchises the occasional conformists or occasional non-conformists, who used to be a large and very estimable body of people, and among them one gentleman of some importance, his Majesty the King, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, who is a Presbyterian in Scotland.

While this temper prevails in the Church of England, it is useless to think of reunion, for no terms can be offered to the Free Churches which they could accept without loss of self-respect.

One of the greatest difficulties in the way of Church reform is the presence in the Anglican Church of a number of persons who cannot give up the hope of an ultimate reconciliation with the Church of Rome. They have exposed us to several humiliating rebuffs, such as the absurd "conversations" at Malines, on which Archbishop Davidson ought to have set his foot; and there is not the slightest prospect of any concessions on the side of Rome. Personally, I am glad of it. But a powerful section of the Church will resist, to the last ditch, any action on the part of the Church of England which would finally bar the door to such a reconciliation.

Many of us think that a revision of our formularies is desirable, in view of established results in natural science and scholarship. Others would be glad to recognize the full validity of Presbyterian and Free Church Orders, without which no reunion is possible. Others would like to see women admitted to Holy Orders.

These and other reforms are obstructed by the reluctance of the party which I have mentioned to make the breach with Rome irreparable.

Is there then nothing to be done? Yes, the most important thing—intercommunion.

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This needs no legislation. It is only necessary to take the law into our own hands, as the ritualists have done with complete success from their own point of view. It cannot be stopped.

Already in our cathedrals and large churches, numbers of non-Anglicans communicate, and no questions are asked. I have myself, when I was officiating in Westminster Abbey, given the communion cup to a girl in the uniform of the American Salvation Army. I have never received the sacrament from a Presbyterian minister, but I should have no objection to doing so.

I have no wish to blame the Anglo-Catholics, who are very sincere. It takes all sorts to make a national church. But we must be candid, and acknowledge where the difficulty lies. The report issued by the joint conference claims only to be "a useful basis for further work." This is the utmost that can be claimed for it.

III

DIFFICULTIES ABOUT PRAYER

PRAYING is to religion what thinking is to philosophy. Prayer is religion in action.

The religious impulse is essentially the impulse to pray; religion, wherever it is alive, is prayer; it is the primary fact of the religious life.

If we knew how a man prays, and what he prays about, we should know how much religion he has and what kind of religion; for religion, as A. N. Whitehead says, is not always a good thing.

Prayer is the mystical act *par excellence*, but it is practised by all religious persons, even the most unmystical. The accepted definition of it is "a lifting up of the soul to God"; but that is only the human side of it.

There must also be a descent of the Spirit of God into the human soul, for otherwise we could not come into contact with God. The Spirit prays in and with and for us.

There could be no prayer if God were not both (to use the technical words) immanent and transcendent. If He were only immanent, He would be only our own best selves, and we cannot adore our own best selves. If He were only transcendent, we could not establish any communion with Him; for, as the mystics are fond of saying, we could not see

the sun if there were not something sunlike in ourselves. In every soul, they teach, there is a spark of the divine flame, which can never consent to sin.

If we accept the old definition of prayer as a lifting up of the soul, we are excluding petitions in which the Spirit of God has no part, and we are including a great deal which is not petition—thanksgiving, meditation, and what the mystics call contemplation. Some mystics, as Friedrich Heiler says—an English translation of his classical work on prayer was published recently by the Oxford University Press—discountenance petition for earthly things altogether; I will come back to this question.

The difficulties about the efficacy of prayer, which trouble us all at times, do not touch the value of a habit of prayer in the wider sense.

The value of prayer is admitted even by those who are doubtful whether our prayers “reach to heaven.” “He who rises from his knees a better man,” says George Meredith, “his prayers have been granted.”

Santayana, who like many rationalists is superstitious (he speaks of “ordinary telepathy”) says, “In prayer the soul may be said to accomplish three things; it withdraws within itself and defines its good; it accommodates itself to destiny, and it grows like the ideal which it conceives.”

If this is all, even an atheist can pray—to himself.

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But the believer often doubts whether a particular kind of effect, which has been supposed to follow from a particular kind of prayer, really happens or not.

Our Lord in the Gospels certainly seems to have promised that our petitions, of whatever kind, will be granted if they are made "in His name;" and ever since, Christians have added the name of Christ to their prayers, as if it were a talisman, or as a man uses the name of a friend to back a bill.

But the "name," to a Jew, means much more than an appellation. It is not a quibble to say that "in the name of Christ" means "in the spirit of Christ," as He prayed himself.

And how did He pray, in the garden of Gethsemane for instance? We notice three things—that He prayed for deliverance from physical suffering; that the request was conditional on its being in accordance with God's will; and that it was not granted.

It is significant that the mystical author of the Fourth Gospel was shocked at this narrative, and corrected it into a form which he thought more reverent. He makes Christ say, "And now my soul is troubled. What shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour?' No; for this cause I came to this hour. Father, glorify thy name." But we cannot doubt that the earlier report is the true one.

We no longer pray with the old confidence for

all sorts of things. The notion that the laws of nature are often suspended by miracle is unwelcome to educated people.

Emerson describes his own early recollections. "The minister of Sudbury heard the officiating clergyman praying for rain at Boston. After the service he remonstrated with the minister. 'You Boston ministers, as soon as a tulip wilts under your windows, pray for rain until all Concord and Sudbury are under water.' "

The prayers in the Anglican prayer-book for rain and fine weather are hardly ever used.

But ought we then to give up praying for the recovery of a relation or friend in sickness?

Many years ago it was proposed to test the efficacy of prayer by an experiment at a hospital. Special prayers were to be offered for the recovery of patients in a particular ward, and the results, if any, could be tabulated statistically. The proposal caused great indignation, which I think was unreasonable. It was a fair question to ask, and it is plain that no results are really expected. The clergy are known to be "good lives" for insurance purposes, but even the Clergy Insurance Company never inquires whether the candidate for life insurance has a prayerful wife.

It seems that, so far as evidence is available, prayer does not alter the natural course of events in such matters as the weather and recovery from sickness. Many religious people are most reluctant

to acknowledge this, but we ought to be quite honest with ourselves.

Let us ask first whether we would really have it otherwise. Even when we are in terrible anxiety, do we wish to ask God to change what we believe to be His wise and merciful intentions towards us? Whenever these troubles have come to me I have been content to repeat the words of Christ, "Father, if it be Thy will . . . nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done."

If we ever wish to control events, let us think how very inconvenient it would be if our neighbours could do the same. Earnest prayers for victory were offered in thousands of German churches.

But this does not mean that we should disregard St. Paul's advice, "In everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." It is one thing to make our wishes known and another to demand that they shall be gratified. We need not be ashamed of behaving like children towards our Father in Heaven.

In praying for spiritual things, whether for ourselves or for others, we need make no conditions, because we know that "this is the will of God, even our sanctification." We need only remember that it is useless to pray "Let me die the death of the righteous" unless we are trying to live the life of the righteous. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap" is true of the spiritual life. Sow a habit and

reap a character; sow a character and reap a destiny. But we need help all through, and we must seek it where alone it is to be found.

When people ask my advice on this subject I recommend them not to spend much time in repeating set forms, but not to discard them altogether; to use very brief words of prayer constantly, at all times of the day; to revive, if possible, the old practice of meditation; and not to make prayer only petitionary.

I have said nothing about public worship, which is, perhaps, too much neglected now. I am a little suspicious of the "blue-domer," who says he can feel more devotional in the open air.

As for the silent meetings of the Quakers, I have tried this method; but I cannot prevent my thoughts from wandering for more than a very few minutes.

We are made differently, and we must choose what suits us best. For in prayer we want to "see the invisible," and that is not easy.

IV

PROBLEMS OF DIVORCE

MR. A. P. HERBERT is no doubt quite able to enjoy the comic side of his sudden fame as a politician. That a contributor to *Punch* should come forward as a freak candidate for the representation of Oxford University, that he should be triumphantly elected, and that the Member for that most clerical of all constituencies should begin by leading a successful attack on the marriage law, the very citadel of ecclesiastical rigorism, is almost Gilbertian in its topsy-turviness. He is probably not a little surprised at finding well-known bishops on his side.

The new Bill has naturally revived an old controversy, and the action of the bishops has drawn special attention to one aspect of it. The majority of the bishops are in favour of allowing those whom religious people usually describe as the guilty pair to be admitted to Holy Communion, if their bishop thinks that they sincerely desire it on religious grounds.

The opposition comes chiefly from Anglo-Catholics, who hold that marriage is, by the law of Christ and the authority of the Catholic Church, indissoluble.

My own opinion has not so far been urged by anybody. Perhaps the bishops have considered it

and decided that it is impracticable. Nevertheless, I should like to have the opportunity of putting it before my readers.

There are two presuppositions which I think will be generally accepted.

(1) The Church of England is an autonomous body, which is not bound to conform itself to any other Church, at home or abroad.

The marriage laws of the Roman Catholic and of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, both of them indisputably "Catholic," differ widely. We are not bound to follow either, and we cannot follow both. I remember hearing a sermon from that brilliant preacher, Page Roberts, Dean of Salisbury. "People tell me," he said, "that we ought to obey the Church. But which Church? The oldest Church, which tells me that a priest must be married? Or the Western Church, which tells me that a priest must not be married? Or my own Church, which tells me that a priest may please himself?"

(2) Although the Church of England is established, it is not obliged to make its disciplinary regulations conform to the civil law. The State is bound to legislate for a nation of whom the majority are not practising Anglicans. In disregarding the convictions of the Established Church, it concedes the right of that Church to make rules for its own members without consulting the State.

The Church, then, is absolutely free to make its own rules, without consulting either the usage of

other Churches or the law of the land. The only authority which it is bound to obey is the law of Christ, and what this is is by no means clear.

There has been endless controversy whether in the Gospels our Lord meant to forbid divorce absolutely, or with one exception, the exception being very doubtfully supported by manuscript authority. Further, the exception is not "adultery," but "fornication," in Greek *porneia*, which probably represents an Aramaic word meaning "immoral conduct," a rather vague expression.

Whether our Lord ever made this exception, and what exactly He meant by it if He did make it, we shall never know for certain. If the words are spurious, they are what grammarians call a "gloss," a marginal comment which has found its way into the text. But at the worst, they represent what the early Church thought must have been our Lord's meaning, and that must go for something. There has been another dispute, as to whether, if the exception be admitted, the injured party should be allowed to marry again. Divorce without leave to remarry was unknown in our Lord's time; but He says nothing about it, either way.

My own opinion is that since there is so much uncertainty about our primary authority, and since in any case Christ laid down principles, not rigid laws, the Church has a right to allow the injured party in a divorce to marry again, and to be admitted to all Church privileges.

I dislike the proposed policy of the majority of the bishops, and also that of the dissentients, because they make no distinction between those who have been guilty of breaking up a marriage, and those who have suffered injury without any fault of their own.

We are told that cases of collusion are so frequent that the Church authorities cannot accept the decisions of the courts. Is this really so? Statistics are unprocurable, but I believe in nine divorces out of ten there has been no collusion, and that it is generally quite easy to say which party is responsible for the wreck.

As for the sentimental plea that where there is no love there is no marriage, it is not worth discussing. The marriage vow is the most solemn contract that men and women ever sign. Honourable people keep their contracts, whether they regret having made them or not.

In France, a marriage between an adulterer and his or her paramour is not allowed. This is a rule which I should be glad to see introduced into our civil law, and it seems to me very undesirable that the Church should ever seem to condone such a union.

As for the extension of the grounds of divorce to prolonged desertion, incurable insanity, conviction of felony, and so on, I think the Church would be unwise to excommunicate those who have remarried according to the law of the State. As I have said,

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Christ never meant to introduce rigid legislation; it was part of His great wisdom not to do so.

The bishops wish, in certain circumstances, to allow an adulterer and his or her paramour, now legally married to each other, to be admitted to the sacraments of the Church. Such applications are not often made; but if the applicants saw that they might be whitewashed by the Church, they would have an obvious motive for making the request. Who could refuse to call on a man and woman whom the bishop has accepted as communicants?

The bishops do not seem to have considered that their concession will certainly be abused in this way.

Do I then advocate a direct and life-long ex-communication? Certainly not; I only say that there must be proof of true repentance.

Among the conditions for communicants in the Prayer Book is that they should "examine themselves whether they repent truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life."

Since the Church cannot recognize a marriage between two adulterers, it has a right to require, as a condition of admission to Holy Communion, a signed pledge that the pair repent of their transgression, and undertake no longer to have marital relations with each other. They would not often sign such a pledge? No, they would not often do so; but it is only in very exceptional cases that such people should be admitted to Church privileges,

and there is no other test of true repentance than to forsake the sin.

The bishops, I am sure, do not wish to surrender the pass at a time when the disgraceful conduct of the idle rich, who are perfectly shameless in these matters, sets such a bad example to the nation. I have not had much opportunity of hearing their views in private conversation, but I am inclined to agree with those who think that the effect of their action will be to weaken the sanctions of Christian morality at a point where a courageous assertion of principle is especially necessary.

This is a presumptuous thing to say, for our prelates are wise as well as high-minded men. I am open to conviction, but not convinced.

V

THE GREATEST CRIME IN HISTORY

ON Good Friday the Christian world recalls the greatest crime in history, the barbarous judicial murder of the greatest Friend that humanity has ever had, the gentle Teacher who told us that the whole of morality is summed up in love to God and to our neighbour, and that our neighbour is anyone whom we are able to help.

Peace on earth and goodwill to all men. That was His message, and He was hated and sent to a cruel death. How did it happen?

The Crucifixion is the supreme example in history of co-operative guilt with limited liability. Not one of those who took part in it was wicked enough to commit the whole of the crime by himself. Let us consider in turn the principal actors.

First, of course, comes Judas, the traitor apostle.

His motives and character cannot be determined with certainty. He was the only apostle who belonged to Judaea, not to Northern Palestine. We do not know how or when or why our Lord chose him. But there must have been good in him, or he would not have been called, and he would not have left his home and his work, whatever it was, to share the hard life of a wandering preacher.

He was trusted by his comrades, who made him

their treasurer. The Fourth Gospel, written seventy or eighty years afterwards, says that he was a thief; but if he had been known to be dishonest, he would not have been allowed to "keep the bag." His memory was naturally held in abhorrence by Christians; the Acts of the Apostles gives a much less probable account of his death, inconsistent with what the Gospels tell us. He was probably not a thief.

The chief priests bargained with him for a small sum of money to tell them where Jesus was to be found. A few hours later, when he heard that his Master was condemned to die, he repented, brought back the bribe to his employers, and went and hanged himself.

Dante was only expressing the verdict of Christians generally when he places Judas in the lowest circle of Hell, eternally champ'd by Satan himself, with his head within the diabolic jaws.

But the action which has condemned him to this unenviable immortality does not look like cool, mercenary treason. For some reason Judas did not think that he was sending Jesus to His death. Perhaps he wished to force His hand, to oblige Him to summon "legions of angels" to deliver Him. Perhaps he only realized the danger of a popular rising which would have been suppressed by a pitiless massacre. We do not know; but we may guess that Jesus forgave him as readily as He forgave Peter.

Pontius Pilate had the reputation of being a cruel Governor; he had already massacred a number of Galileans, we do not know why. His business, as he saw it, was to keep a turbulent province quiet, to suppress all disorder, especially if it seemed political, and above all not to get into trouble with his jealous and suspicious master, the Emperor Tiberius.

If he had been taxed with injustice, he would probably have said: "I realized that the prisoner was a harmless sort of fanatic. If I had taken his claim to be a king seriously, I should of course have crucified all his followers as well as himself. I did my best to get him off; but when the leading men at Jerusalem threatened to denounce me to the Emperor if I let him go, what was I to do?"

Anatole France describes an imaginary conversation between Pilate and a friend some years afterwards.

"Do you remember, Pilate, when you were procurator of Judaea, sending to execution a wandering preacher named Jesus of Nazareth, who had made himself obnoxious to the Temple authorities?"

"I dare say I did; but I have no recollection of it."

This is quite possible. Pilate acted like a coward; but it was not the first time, nor the last, that a colonial Governor has given way to popular clamour.

The largest share of the blame rests with the Chief Priests. But I am afraid an average College

of Cardinals, in the "ages of faith," would have behaved no better.

Jesus was a layman, an unauthorized evangelist. He had uttered some very sharp criticisms of the Jerusalem hierarchy, the scribes and professors of divinity, and the Pharisees. Ecclesiastics are shrewd judges of their own interests, and they felt that the teaching of Jesus was even more dangerous to them than it appeared to be.

And what was this that He had said about destroying the Temple and rebuilding it in three days? With a little ingenuity He might be made to have said, "I will destroy the Temple." No doubt what He really said was, "If this Temple, made with hands, is destroyed, I can very soon build another made without hands"—which is exactly what He has done. But even so it was menacing enough to those who had the charge of the Temple at Jerusalem, and whose loyalty and devotion were centred in the sacred building.

So they resolved that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. On a smaller scale, this is what the French said about Dreyfus.

As for the mob, they shouted "Hosanna" on Sunday and howled "Crucify Him" on Thursday. That is the way a mob behaves if it is properly worked up by expert demagogues.

The Roman soldiers carried out the orders of their non-commissioned officer. It was all in the day's work.

THE GREATEST CRIME IN HISTORY

It thus appears that this appalling crime was the work of several people, none of whom was necessarily altogether bad. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" was the judgment of divine nobleness and generosity.

It is impossible to apportion the blame justly for any public crime. We had no right to force the Germans to accept the whole of the war guilt.

The moral for us, I suppose, is that we may be in danger, without meaning it, of being cogs in some great machine of iniquity, which may at last grind out crimes, either of injustice or of revenge, which would fill us with horror.

But there is a happier side to it. The healing principle in the world is the self-sacrifice of the good for the evil.

Many others, besides our great Exemplar, have given their lives "for the sin of the world." Many more—we do not always recognize it—are carrying much more than their proper share of the burdens of social life. They are doing the work that shirkers and deserters refuse to do.

There is no individual justice in this world. The greatest sufferer was He who of all men least deserved it. But His message is: "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven."

VI

JOHN WESLEY

Two centenaries of great interest to all English-speaking Christians are being celebrated this year.

One is the four hundredth anniversary of the English Bible, the other is the two hundredth anniversary of the crisis in the life of John Wesley, which occurred on May 24, 1738.

He referred to this crisis as his "conversion," and taught his followers to expect a similar sudden experience as a normal event in the spiritual life.

It is, in fact, a genuine but unusual phenomenon, and Methodist ministers have told me that they no longer lay stress upon it. But in Wesley's case, as in St. Paul's, it changed the course of his life completely. May 24th was his spiritual birthday.

Archbishop Davidson called Wesley "one of the greatest Englishmen who ever lived," and added that "he changed the outlook and even the character of the English nation." It is a tremendous claim, but I think it may be defended, as it is by Mr. J. Wesley Bready, who, in spite of his name, is not a Methodist. (*England Before and After Wesley*, Hodder and Stoughton.)

This writer has proved that Wesley was not only a very great man but a real saint. No attempts to

belittle either the man or his achievement will bear investigation.

One of his greatest services to his country was to secure that the social reforms, of which he was an ardent supporter, were carried out gradually and without violence. This is, of course, displeasing to the academic ghouls, some of whom apparently would like to see England a blood bath like Russia and Spain. "He diverted energy from the *class struggle*," says J. L. Hammond. "It would be interesting to know what sum was spent on religion by a class which was thereby diverting its resources from a *war* for independence." This wretched Wesley dosed them with religion when they might have been cutting the throats of the gentry!

Wesley's work can be justly estimated only when we know something of the state of England under the first two Georges. Miss Dorothy George's *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* should be studied. It is a hideous picture of a dissolute, atheistical, and utterly selfish ruling class; a Church which, as Gibbon said of his Oxford tutor, remembered that he had a salary to receive and forgot that he had a duty to perform; a mercantile class, battenning on the slave trade; and a populace besotted with gin and ready for any brutality.

Never, perhaps, has England sunk so low as in the generation after Marlborough's victories. This invites reflection, and it is on the whole encouraging if one is inclined to be pessimistic about the future.

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Improvement was beginning under George II, chiefly because that capable rascal Sir Robert Walpole had kept the country out of war; but the picture is still unpleasant. Why were the people content to have it so?

Thus God and Nature formed the general frame,
And bade self-love and social be the same . . .
One truth is clear—whatever is, is right.

So Pope declared. It was a comfortable doctrine for the comfortable. God and Nature—who are we to question the wisdom and justice of their arrangements when two such authorities agree? So Dr. Watts can lift his eyes to heaven and say:

No more than others I deserve,
But God has given me more;
For I have bread, while others starve
Or beg from door to door.

Then the pendulum swings violently, and we have people saying: "Whatever is, is wrong."

As for the Church, we have only to look at the eighteenth-century portraits in any episcopal palace or deanery to see the kind of men who were promoted in those days.

Swift speaks of a prelate "mounting fast to the top of the ladder without the merit of a single virtue." The letters which some of them wrote, touting for preferment, are disgusting.

One ingenious gentleman made a bet of £5,000 with the King's mistress that he would *not* be made

a bishop. The lady duly collected this debt of honour. The notorious Bishop Tomline was too assiduous in inquiries after the health of the Bishop of Durham. "Tell your master," said the invalid at last, "that I am almost well again; but the Bishop of Winchester has a very nasty cough, *if that will do.*" It did do.

Can we wonder that, as Archbishop Secker complained, "Christianity is now railed at and ridiculed with very little reserve, and the teachers of it without any at all"?

Wesley was at heart a loyal Anglican to the end. He never meant to found a new sect.

The Roman Church would probably have harnessed him as the head of a new order of preaching friars. But the Church of England not only let him go but made his position in the Church impossible. He was never asked to preach in a cathedral; he was assailed by the clergy with scurrilous abuse; in some places the incumbents seem to have aided and abetted the mob in using personal violence against the Methodist preachers.

For though his preaching had an influence over the masses such as no other revivalist has approached he encountered great hostility and was often in danger.

At St. Ives "the mob of the town burst into the room and created much disturbance. I went into the midst, and brought the head of the mob up with me to the desk. I received but one blow on

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the side of the head, after which we reasoned the case."

Wesley never flinched and never lost his temper, but he was always ready to reason the case.

There is a ludicrous account in his journal of how he got into a controversy with a Calvinist on horse-back. At last the Calvinist realized who he was, and spurred his horse to a gallop. "But I was better mounted," says Wesley; so they galloped side by side, while Wesley discharged broadsides of Arminian theology upon his unlucky opponent.

Wesley must not be held responsible for the hysterical scenes which sometimes occurred at his meetings. He was himself one of the sanest and healthiest of men, living to a great age in spite of his almost incredible labours. In later life his face was full of dignity, serenity, and strength.

It seems that he was a distant cousin of the Duke of Wellington, whose real name was Wesley. The evangelist hated war and cared nothing about pedigrees, so he might not have shown much interest in the career of the Iron Duke, if he had lived to see it.

The defection of the Wesleyan Methodists is perhaps the greatest loss that the Church of England has suffered. In the United States the Methodists are much more numerous than the Episcopal Church; and in this country, though they have not contributed very much to theology or scholarship, they are an important part of English Protestantism.

It is largely owing to their absence that the Church of England is at present overbalanced on the side of Catholicism, so that it hardly represents the religion of the English people.

It is very difficult to heal schisms, the nature of which is to grow wider. When I was a child there were many occasional conformists or occasional non-conformists in the village where I lived. Now the cleavage is complete.

But we may still try for "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and make up for our treatment of John Wesley in his lifetime by doing justice to his memory.

VII

STARVING THE CLERGY

A GROUP of aristocratic Church laymen has memorialized the Archbishop on the marriage and housing of the clergy.

They point out that the majority of the clergy are no longer gentlemen by birth, and have no money of their own. They therefore cannot expect to live in comfortable houses, or to bring up families, or to have the same standard of living as other professional men.

Their lordships recommend that the clergy shall be forbidden to marry before middle life, that the majority of them shall be lifelong celibates living in communities, and that the rest shall occupy labourers' cottages.

All patrons of livings are familiar with letters from the leading parishioners, who may be wealthy men, reminding the patron that, as the living is worth only £250 a year, the vicar must have private means. It seldom occurs to them that if they want the services of a well-trained man, whose education may have cost two thousand pounds, they ought to be prepared to pay him fairly, as they do a doctor or lawyer. Some of them have the impudence to excuse their meanness by quoting texts about the deceitfulness of riches,

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as if these were intended to apply only to the clergy.

There are, thank heaven, some saints in the Church who are willing to work for nothing, for the love of God. And there may be half a dozen men of genius, like the late Dick Sheppard and his successor at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, who are so loved and honoured, and have such a way with them, that they can get whatever they ask for. But the majority of the clergy are, and always must be, decent, ordinary men who have chosen what they consider a useful and honourable profession, and who when they entered it had no intention of cutting themselves off from all prospect of domestic happiness.

Marriage is the right of all and the duty of most.

The question for the laity, which does not seem to have occurred to the memorialists, is whether they wish to starve the parochial clergy or to treat them decently. The state of things which they describe is a crying disgrace to the wealthiest Church in Christendom.

The change in the social origin of the clerical family since my young days has certainly been great. But this change is not peculiar to the clerical profession. The same thing is happening in medicine, in the army, at the bar, and even in diplomacy. The gentry send their sons, if they have any, into business; the black-coat professions are more and

more staffed from what used to be called the lower middle class.

But in truth these distinctions are obsolete. We are on the way to a classless society.

The change which, with all my Victorian prejudices, I do not regret, is the result of remarkable changes within the lower middle class itself.

I have just been reading a once popular novel, Warren's *Ten Thousand a Year*, describing the fortunes and misfortunes of Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse, a draper's assistant and a repulsive little cad.

The modern draper's assistant is a well educated and well mannered young man, whom it would be monstrous to call a counter-jumper; and as for the young lady who stands behind the counter in a milliner's shop, she may be a peer's daughter who is bored with living at home.

The young men who are stepping into the learned professions were probably educated at a County Council school where the teaching is excellent, and where the headmaster, himself a Public School man, has tried successfully to transplant the best traditions of the place where he was educated.

The Church ought to be a democratic profession, with a career open to the talents. In fact, it generally has been so. But that is no reason for starving its ministers and telling them that they are too poor to think of marriage.

The cottage, I admit, need not imply poverty.

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The neighbourhood where I live is dotted with doll's houses, very tastefully furnished, the homes of gentle-folk who keep one servant, or none, because servants are almost impossible to find.

The large rectory is not only a burden to the rector; it is often difficult to find anyone to buy or rent it.

Where there is no nursery the mistress of the house can manage well enough without servants. Unhappily, that is often a reason for having no nursery.

No doubt the question may be raised whether the old parochial system is not something of an anachronism. It is not self-evident that we need a vast organization, with twenty thousand trained officials, to help us to be moral and religious.

In the East, where religions grow wild, an army of gardeners is not required. Still less does anyone there suggest that the best way to grow a crop of exotics is to keep the gardeners in hot-houses, while the young plants are in the open air.

The parochial system was devised for an illiterate age, and for an age when it was supposed to be of vital importance to have a priest always at hand in case of need.

Why, it may be asked, should not the services be taken by a lay-reader, or a broadcast service turned on? If we want a sermon, are there not plenty of good sermons in print?

And yet, is not the rectory or vicarage still a

wholesome centre of village life? I have known many parsonages, and I think the parishes would be poorer without them.

The parochial system is fighting for its life, and many of the clergy are deeply discouraged. But I am convinced that it ought not to be allowed to die.

There is, however, one change which I think would greatly increase the usefulness of the Church. I have suggested it before in these columns.

I should like to see in every town at least two recognized physicians of the soul, one male, one female, who might be consulted by residents in the district just as we consult a doctor when we are ill.

Probably most people need advice of this kind at some time of their lives; and as half their troubles are connected with sex, it is not so easy for them to go to the vicar next door, even if he is specially trained to deal with such cases.

We need a more scientific system of training in religious psychology.

The Roman Church deals with such cases better than we do, but I cannot think that a celibate priest is the best counsellor for men and women in some of the commonest of these troubles. It is fortunate for us that our medical men often give wise and high-minded advice, but it is really the business of the clergy. One can generally do far more good by talking to an individual alone than by

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pouring a bucketful of good advice over rows of listeners in church.

These remarks, though prompted by indignation, are not meant to reflect upon the loyal and earnest churchmen who signed the memorial. But it is all the more significant that such men should describe a shocking state of things in the national Church and should describe it without an atom of self-reproach.

We are too much in the habit of thinking that the Church is adequately endowed. In fact, the clergy in the nineteenth century, to a large extent, kept the Church. In our day the church laity must keep the clergy, and if they value their self-respect they will not deliberately starve them.

VIII

TWO CATHOLIC MODERNISTS

MISS PETRE has followed up her reminiscences of her two friends, Baron von Hügel and George Tyrrell, which were published a few months ago, by editing the very interesting correspondence between them.

The two men were both striking personalities, the former perhaps the greatest theologian of his generation in England, the latter a brilliant writer with a considerable influence as a priest.

The friendship between them, which ended in a tragedy for the younger man, has a much wider than a merely personal interest; it raises questions which concern all Christian Churches.

Von Hügel was an aristocrat, bred in diplomacy. He was perhaps a saint, but he had no wish to be a martyr.

He said himself that nothing would compensate him for being deprived of the sacraments of his Church. He knew pretty well how far it would be safe for him to go in speculation—some way further than would have been safe for anyone else.

The authorities of his Church very wisely left him alone, knowing that he would never defy them, and that he was the greatest asset that the

Roman Church had in England. His influence was in fact much greater in our Church than in his own, though he was a very stiff institutionalist. Tyrrell accused him of thinking that it was better to be an atheist than an Anglican, and he cut his old friend Alfred Fawkes, the ablest of the Roman priests who have joined our communion. Poor Fawkes was left out in the cold by our Church. That is our way, in marked contrast to the warm welcome given to seceders to Rome from Anglicanism. Tyrrell refused to break off the friendship, and Fawkes, by his own wish, is buried next to the grave of Tyrrell at Storrington.

George Tyrrell was a man of very different character, an impulsive and combative Irishman. As long as he restricted himself to his priestly duties, he was popular and successful; but under the influence of von Hügel he began to study Christian origins, as expounded by Modernists like the Abbé Loisy.

He saw more clearly than von Hügel what the logical goal of Modernism was, but he made the great mistake of underestimating the intelligence of his superiors. "Give them their sounds, and you may say what you like."

The Jesuits however, whatever we may think of them, are not stupid. Tyrrell was expelled from the Order and excommunicated. If his friend Brémond had not braved the censure of the Church, he would have been buried like a dog.

Tyrrell did not take this treatment lying down; he lashed out furiously, as these letters show.

"It is impossible to modify the Roman system, or deal with it otherwise than by dynamite." "I had rather see England Old Catholic than Papist. As against Rome, the Old Catholics were in the right, and Rome on the devil's side as usual."

"If the Roman Church cannot be reformed, she will be a standing menace to civilization and religion."

Clearly Father Tyrrell was not in his right place as a Jesuit!

Von Hügel, as I have said, was determined to remain a loyal son of the Church. But how could he fail to see that his studies were leading him to the edge of an abyss into which he had no intention of plunging? Why did he stand by Loisy to the last, and use all his influence to prevent his condemnation?

So far as I can see, there was never any ambiguity about Loisy's position. There are, he said in a quite early work, "as it were two Christs"—one a deluded agitator like Theudas, who was summarily executed by the Romans for the crazy project of attempting a *coup d'état* at Jerusalem, and the other the object of the Church's worship.

"There can be no conflict between history and religion, because the historian never encounters God." The Church is certainly entirely different from what it was at first, but what does that matter?

"If you want to convince yourself of the identity of a grown man with what he was as an infant, you do not try to squeeze him into his cradle." The Church had to live, and so it became what it is.

Loisy seems to have thought that he had spiked the guns of rationalist critics. especially of the Germans, whom as a Frenchman he disliked, by accepting all and more than all that they urged against Christianity as a historical religion, and then saying that it does not matter. Faith is one thing and fact is another. The Church at any rate is a very solid reality. It has shown its vitality by living two thousand years. No historical criticism can hurt it at all.

When the Roman Church decided that this kind of defence was illegitimate, and was in fact "a compendium of all the heresies," Loisy became a layman, and is still exercising his brilliant powers of destructive criticism out of reach of ecclesiastical censure.

Why did von Hügel try to protect Loisy? That is the really interesting question, for he was certainly a devout Christian as well as a profound theologian.

I think I can suggest two answers.

The first is that von Hügel was a mystic and a deep student of mysticism. Now mysticism, which is the religion of direct spiritual experience, is very independent of past history.

Like St. Paul, who was himself a great mystic, men of this type do not care to "know Jesus Christ after the flesh"; they are content if they can say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

They are so sure that Christ is risen that they are not interested to know how He rose; and if, as Loisy says, His body remained in the ditch into which it was thrown, does that matter to the Christian mystic now?

It is impossible to say what von Hügel really believed about these "fact-like stories," as he calls them. Even very honest men will turn back when they find themselves in conflict with sacred authority. But the fact that von Hügel was a mystic explains why he did not feel that Loisy was subverting the foundations of his faith.

The second answer is that his correspondence, and some of his books, make it clear that at this time he was steeped in the writings of certain French thinkers, Le Roy, Blondel, Laberthonnière, and others, whose philosophy is anti-intellectualist and anti-scholastic.

I could not here give even the slightest sketch of this movement, which has many ramifications; but it is antagonistic to what Catholics call the perennial philosophy, which is based on Thomas Aquinas, and through him on the school of Plato and Aristotle.

Of course a man may be a good Christian without knowing anything about the Greeks, but

to tear Greek thought out of Christian theology would be a major operation of the utmost gravity.

This French school was closely associated with the Modernist movement. I think, but I am not sure, that von Hügel drew away from them in his later years.

The question whether Christianity stands or falls with the factual truth of certain supernatural events which are recorded to have happened nearly two thousand years ago is, I need not say, enormously important. The tendency now is to lay very little stress on miracles, even on those which are mentioned in the Creeds.

The famous words of Aristotle, that "poetry is more philosophical and of greater worth than history; for history tells us what happened once, poetry what may happen" (universal truth), are applied to dogma, which is said to be a sacrament of what is always and everywhere true. It is certainly curious that the very arguments which seemed to the first disciples the most convincing are now to many the chief obstacles to believing.

Temperaments differ; we cannot see through each other's spectacles. There may be many more tragedies like that of George Tyrrell, many apparently diplomatic intellectual refusals such as Tyrrell saw in von Hügel, before this problem is cleared up—if, indeed, it ever is cleared up.

IX

INTOLERANCE

"TOLERATION," wrote Lord Balfour in an early essay, "is one of the most valuable empirical maxims of modern politics." Sir Thomas More will allow no coercion in his Utopia.

"King Utopus gave to every man free liberty and choice to believe what he would. He was persuaded that it is in no man's power to believe what he list." Nor do the Utopians "constrain a man with threatenings to dissemble his mind, for all manner of lies they do marvellously detest and abhor."

Mill condemns persecution on rather different grounds. "We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavouring to stifle is a false opinion, and if we were sure, stifling would be an evil still."

Persecution, according to these authorities, is wrong because experience shows that it is ineffective; because it is unjust and promotes lying; and because we can never be quite sure that we are right and the other side wrong.

The post-war despotisms approve of and practise persecution because they think it is very effective; because they recognize no justice except the will of the ruler; and because they are quite sure that they are right.

They are right, unfortunately, in thinking that persecution is sometimes successful. As Loisy says, you cannot kill ideas "par coups de bâton." They will come to life again sometime; but you can scotch them very effectively.

On what grounds may intolerance be justified? Leslie Stephen wrote a good essay on the suppression of poisonous opinions, and partly justified their suppression, if we can be quite sure that they are poisonous. Even in liberty-loving England, a man is not allowed to advocate political assassination or sexual perversity.

But the motives have generally been political. A cast-iron tyranny, utilizing all the forces of the nation, may have a survival value greater than that of a democracy, and such a government cannot tolerate opposition. Even Plato, I regret to say, would prohibit all religious nonconformity under pain of death.

Persecution died out when it was recognized that there is an adequate basis for the maintenance of order in a State in those principles of right and wrong which are universally accepted, apart from the denominational beliefs of the citizens. This is really the foundation and condition of democracy. When people begin to differ about fundamentals, democracy is doomed, and the Government will once more begin to persecute. His Majesty's Opposition cannot be allowed to upset the apple-cart.

Is Christianity intolerant on principle? In one sense yes, in another sense no. There are some amiable persons who are honorary members of all religions, like the Emperor Alexander Severus, who put up a statue to Christ, by the side of other religious leaders, in his chapel.

Real Christianity is very unaccommodating in this way. It holds that certain essential doctrines are true, and that it is the business of the Church to uphold them. Those who object to this rigour, says Amiel, "confuse the right of the individual to be free with the duty of the institution to be something."

But coercion of men's minds and wills is quite foreign to Christianity. Such a statement needs defence. Coercion was regarded as a surgical operation, the cutting out of a plague-spot which endangered the health of the body politic. Accordingly, it was directed against heretics rather than unbelievers, though the Jews were looked upon as proper objects of cruelty. The Crusades were justified as aimed at the reconquest of the Christian holy places.

When James and John wished to call down fire from heaven upon a Samaritan village, Jesus turned and rebuked them. (This passage has been amplified in the later manuscripts followed by the Authorized Version.) So a second century Christian writer says, "Force is not an attribute of God."

All through Church history there have been noble

protests against what had become the practice of the Church; but unhappily among the advocates of persecution we must reckon Sir Thomas More as Chancellor of England, who earlier in his career had written the surprisingly liberal sentiments which I quoted just now.

The Church had become an autocracy, and like other autocracies it could not tolerate opposition.

The usual policy of a despotic government is to make friends with the Church, and to make it the right arm of the State. Part of the bargain may be that the secular arm shall punish heretics.

But the Church, as long as it retains any self-respect, is not submissive to authority. The claim, "We must obey God rather than man," can be used against any unwelcome exercise of power.

The orthodox doctrine is that we ought not to obey bad laws. "An unjust law is no law," says Suarez. This is not the temper which Hitler, or any other dictator, wants to encourage.

The philosopher Locke, though a friend of toleration, says: "That Church can have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate which is constituted upon such a bottom that all those who enter into it do thereby deliver themselves up to the protection and service of another prince."

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries this was a sound reason for not tolerating those who were almost traitors on principle; but no one would

now suggest that our English Roman Catholics cannot be trusted to be good citizens.

Hitler, however, can stand no divided allegiance, and both Catholics and Protestants feel the weight of his hand.

He will have to "go to Canossa," as even Bismarck did in his Kulturkampf.

As Theodore Beza said to Henry of Navarre, "Sire, it belongs to the Church of God, in whose name I speak, to endure blows and not to inflict them. But will it please your Majesty to remember that the Church is an anvil which has worn out many hammers?"

Under a régime of intolerance, all the finer fruits of the spirit wither. It cannot secure honest service. A man who can hold his tongue can hold anything—even a bishopric. But the intellect can flourish only in freedom.

Einstein, who is a prophet in our day, has spoken the truth. "If we want to resist the powers which threaten to suppress intellectual and individual freedom, we must keep clearly before us what is at stake. Without such freedom there would have been no Shakespeare, no Goethe, no Newton, no Faraday, no Pasteur, no Lister. Only men who are free can create the works which make life worth living."

The Continent of Europe is threatened with a Sahara of the higher intellect. There was a time when Professor Seeley said that good books are

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generally written in German. No one could say that now.

Christendom has not always been faithful to the teaching of its Founder. But I believe that if we look at it rightly, "His service is perfect freedom." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

X

LAUGHTER AND TEARS

I WONDER whether it has struck any of my readers that there is not a hearty laugh anywhere in the Bible.

I can only recall three verses in the Old Testament where laughter is mentioned, except where someone is to be "laughted to scorn." No artist has ever dared to depict Christ with a merry twinkle in his eye or a broad smile on his lips.

I cannot see why it should be derogatory to the Creator to suppose that He has a sense of humour. One meets so many people who can only have been created for a joke.

I can imagine that St. Paul, like the Scotsman, "joked with difficulty"; but he was a happy man, as were the early Christians generally. St. Augustine before his conversion was attracted by the "restrained mirthfulness" of his Christian friends.

St. Francis of Assisi would not tolerate grumpiness in his followers, who were called "God's merry men" (*joculatores Dei*). Some of them found it such fun to be alive that they burst out laughing during divine service, for which they were duly whipped.

Several philosophers have written on the psychology of laughter—rather disappointingly, I think.

Hobbes finds the source of laughter in the experi-

ence of "a sudden glory" in the conception of some eminency in ourselves by comparison with the inferiority of others. This is ill-natured; it is like the "unquenchable laughter" which arose among Homer's gods when they watched Hephaestus (Vulcan) bustling about to wait upon them. What was the joke? Because Hephaestus was lame.

Schopenhauer hits the nail on the head when he says that the cause of laughter is the sudden perception of an incongruity. But it must be incongruity of a certain kind. Some contrasts are not funny at all; some are very sad.

A typically comic incident is a trivial accident to a dignified person, or a contretemps in a solemn function. The old don who chased a black hen down the High Street at Oxford, thinking it was his college cap, was laughable. So is the Derby dog, defying the police by running across the course.

William James thinks that we feel amused because we have just laughed; but this does not explain the laugh. We may frown ourselves into a passion, and perhaps weep ourselves into sorrow, but we cannot tickle ourselves into laughing.

Unexpected incongruity is also the essence of the joke and pun. The advice of an American to an after-dinner speaker: "If you don't strike oil in the first two minutes, you had better stop *boring*," is a good example.

The Irish bull, generally not unintentional, never fails to evoke laughter. I think my two favourites

are the story of the Irishman on a kicking horse, which at last caught its foot in the stirrup. "If you are going to get on, it's time for me to get off," said the rider. And this: "Have you seen Mike lately?" "Yes, I saw him yesterday; we were on opposite sides of the street. But when we got to the middle of the road, faith, it was neither of us."

Dean Swift was annoyed by a crowd which collected on his doorstep to see an eclipse. He sent out his servant with a handbell to announce that by order of the Dean of St. Patrick's the eclipse had been postponed. Being Irishmen, they shouted with laughter and dispersed.

Lord Chesterfield thanked heaven that no one had ever heard him laugh. Was this the perfection of good breeding, or not? I think that when one has made a witty remark it is pleasant to have a little noise, for in spite of a member of the house of Commons, we cannot "hear a smile."

Tears are the discharge of a gland, the normal function of which is to lubricate the eyeball and the inner surface of the eyelids. It is difficult to say why a depressed emotional state should stimulate this gland to activity.

The Englishman dislikes this proof that his feelings are stirred. He will not weep if he can help it. The southern European has much less shame.

It was noticed in the war that a wounded Frenchman often wept when he was told that his injuries were mortal, whereas the Englishman received the

news in stoical silence, as if it was a secret between himself and his Maker. The ancient Greeks wept without the slightest embarrassment whenever they were moved by joy or grief. "They wept loudly, shedding copious tears," is quite a common line in Homer.

Is our stoical repression wise? Modern psychology discourages repression. Emotions which are denied their natural outlet may take their revenge. Besides, the Stoic soon discovers that the easiest way not to show emotion is not to feel it.

For my own part, if I were in trouble, though a stoical friend might be very wise and very helpful, I should prefer to have someone near me who was really sorry. St. Paul's advice, "Rejoice with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep," is more human and more amiable. It is possible, I think, that our English tradition of self-control has sometimes led to real coldness and want of sympathy.

But we must mention another attitude towards tears, besides the two notions that they may be freely indulged and that they should be suppressed. In the lives of the saints we read of female aspirants to holiness who have had the special grace of tears. When they thought of their sins, as they often did, their eyes gushed out with water, so that they sometimes stood in a pool of their own tears.

Readers of the curious journal of Margery Kempe, discovered quite lately, know how proud she was of her "boisterous" fits of weeping, accom-

panied by groans and cries, which were very disturbing to her neighbours.

Medically, these stories are interesting, as showing how much these secretions may be influenced by the will. They may throw some light on another queer fashion, the fainting (or feinting?) fits which apparently made the young ladies of the Early Victorian age so attractive to the other sex. The modern girl could not faint if she tried, and certainly would never try.

XI

THE SOUL OF A PRIEST

I HAD never heard the name of Georges Bernanos, nor (if they will forgive me) of his English publishers, the Boriswood Press. But his *Diary of a Country Priest* is destined to be a classic; I am sure of it.

What Dr. Bernanos's own beliefs may be we cannot tell, but he has dug so deep into the soul of a French *curé* that it is difficult to remember that the book is not an actual *journal intime*.

The reader is deeply moved with sympathy for this simple and unworldly peasant, stricken by an incurable disease which anyone with the slightest knowledge of medicine can diagnose the first time it is mentioned, though the patient has no suspicion what is the matter with him till at last, after putting it off many times, he makes up his mind to consult a physician, who pronounces his sentence of death.

This young priest thinks for himself, and in spite of the shyness and gaucherie of which he is too painfully conscious, is a shrewd judge of character and of the society in which he moves.

He has great courage, and can speak home truths to the squire and his family, who, we gather, still retain in rural France some relics of the feudal prestige which till lately surrounded the English landowner. His own religious faith, though often

troubled, triumphs at the end, when he has to face a probably painful dying.

The book is a profound psychological study of a perhaps not unusual type. But we are made to feel that we ought not to speak of types of human beings. Each character is individual, and if we could see it in its hidden depths it would stir our affection and our pity.

Some people, much more often women than men, have the precious gift of penetrating sympathy. They evoke confidences and give help. They may be, and often are, among the most valuable members of society.

The book is full of pungent criticisms of life, many of them put into the mouth of a half-cynical clerical friend of the diarist. I will give a few of them, but they are much better when read in their context.

"Some of us are merely clinging on to old habits, sometimes to a mere parrot vocabulary, its formulae worn so smooth by constant use that they justify everything and question nothing."

"There is nothing harder than to break down the pride of the very poor."

"Talk cures to an incurable, he will be only too anxious to believe you."

"Judas was interested in the pauper problem, like any millionaire."

"The mediocre priest is ugly."

"The Master whom we serve not only judges our

life but shares it. It would be far easier to satisfy a geometric and moralistic God."

"Confession barely skims the surface of conscience."

"Faith is not a thing which one loses; we merely cease to shape our lives by it."

"If ever our species is to perish, it will die of boredom."

"Hell, madame, is not to love any more."

It is tempting to compare or contrast the life of an English country parson with that of a French *curé de campagne*.

In the first place, their early education is entirely different. The Anglican clergyman usually comes from a middle-class home, and is educated either at a public school or at a County Council school. He is practically never "trained for the ministry" until at the age of twenty-two or thereabouts he spends a year or two years at a theological college before being ordained.

Even this short preparation was formerly the exception rather than the rule, but the bishops now put pressure on ordinands to go to one of the theological colleges.

The boy has probably not made up his mind to be ordained before he leaves school, and in any case he has had the same education as those who mean to enter other professions or to go into business. Nothing is done to mould his character and habits with a view to his becoming a priest.

Very different is the early training of a Catholic priest. His parents, who are often poor peasants, choose for him the clerical career, which appeals to them both as a noble one in itself and as carrying with it some rise in the social scale.

He is sent to a seminary, where the system is as different from that of an English public school as can well be imagined.

What the effect sometimes is on an independent and naturally rebellious character may be judged by a conversation which Emil Ludwig had at Moscow with the Russian dictator Stalin. (I know nothing about the training for the priesthood in the Orthodox Eastern Church, but it appears to resemble that at a Jesuit seminary.)

"It was not till I was in the clerical seminary," said Stalin to Ludwig, "that I became a Socialist, and then out of opposition to the régime in vogue there. It was nothing but constant espionage and chicanery.

"At nine o'clock in the morning we were summoned to our tea, and when we came back to our dormitories we found that all the drawers had been ransacked. And just as they ransacked our papers, they ransacked every corner of our souls. It was unbearable. I would have gone to any length and championed any cause that was possible to champion if only I could use it as a protest against that régime."

The rebels thus eliminate themselves, and the

submissive remain, inured to having their souls turned inside out, cowed by authority, and with the "*ton laïque*," always suspected by the hierarchy, carefully eradicated from their thoughts and conversation. They become and are regarded as being a sort of third sex. The idea of a married priest inspires a French Catholic with a horror which we find it difficult to understand. Even the infidel and profligate Talleyrand, who had been a priest, felt more comfortable, we are told, when his insane wife died. He could now receive the last sacraments!

Does this highly specialized training make a man more or less fit for his pastoral duties? Can a celibate understand average human nature as well as a married man? Ought not a physician of the soul to know something of the ordinary life in the world, its experiences and its temptations? Above all, is it to the advantage of any nation that its priests should be trained like a corps of Janissaries? These are not easy questions to answer.

The Catholic priest is professionally more competent than the average Anglican parson. He has been well grounded in the philosophical theology of St. Thomas Aquinas. He has been prepared for the duties of the confessional by the traditional psychology of Catholicism, which embodies much empirical wisdom. He can speak with authority—the authority of the Church—while the Protestant can only give advice, using the best of his own judgment, and may sometimes be called impertinent for his pains.

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Women sometimes (by no means always) confide in him more readily because his very dress proclaims him to be not exactly a man. It is acknowledged that he has as good a right to examine the souls of his flock as a doctor to examine their bodies. The practice of confession, with all its abuses, which I believe are now nothing like so bad as they were in the so-called ages of faith, ought not to have been discontinued, though I should prefer to call it consultation, and not to connect it with formal absolution, a responsibility which I should be sorry to assume. But the last question in the preceding paragraph is, I think, a very serious objection to the Catholic system.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

I

OVER-POPULATION OR RACE SUICIDE

WHY cannot people keep their heads when they are discussing vital statistics? Ever since 1798, the date of Malthus's famous essay, a torrent of nonsense has poured forth from Press and platform, first about over-population, and now about race-suicide—both equally unreasonable.

Thomas Robert Malthus, professor of history and political economy at Haileybury College from 1805 to 1834, was a social reformer whose main object in his own words, was "to raise the relative proportion between the price of labour and the price of provisions, so as to enable the labourer to command a larger share of the necessaries and comforts of life."

Most of the reforms which he advocated were carried out many years later—popular education, savings-banks in every town, vaccination, and the abolition of slavery. He thought that population was everywhere pressing on the means of subsistence, and that this must be so, since population can increase in a geometrical ratio, food only in an arithmetical ratio.

The Law of Diminishing Returns applies to the production of food, not to the multiplication of human beings. Population must therefore be regu-

lated by voluntary postponement of marriage, unless we are prepared to leave it to nature, whose methods are "misery and vice."

The essay was republished, almost as a new book, in 1803, and made a great commotion. The Whigs and Utilitarians were converted, and a few prominent clergymen—Paley, Copleston, and Archbishop Sumner. The two Mills, Ricardo, Macintosh, Whitbread, and Brougham all gave in their adhesion. Darwin and Russell Wallace both acknowledged that the reading of Malthus had suggested to them the line of research which proved so fruitful.

On the other side, the amiable Malthus became the best-abused man in England. Tories like Southey and Coleridge, and Radicals like Shelley, joined in denouncing him. Marx attacked him in very offensive language, and Proudhon stigmatized his book as "a theory of assassination."

Both sides lost their tempers. Shelley accused this enlightened humanitarian of "wishing to lull the oppressors of mankind into a security of everlasting triumph." John Stuart Mill, on his side, declared that "little improvement can be expected in morality until the producing of large families is regarded with the same feelings as drunkenness or any other physical excess."

It is acknowledged now that there were fallacies in Malthus's book. It is quite possible for food supplies to increase in a geometrical ratio; on the other hand, there is no necessity why they should

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increase at all. Nor is it true that population always presses against the means of subsistence; there are exceptional cases where tribes have dwindled in the midst of plenty.

But the main point, that man has an inherent power of multiplying beyond his power of getting food is as true of our species as of any other.

The masses paid little attention to either side in the controversy till the end of the 'seventies, when almost simultaneously in several European countries men began to ask whether the dismal procession of coffins and cradles which had contented their ancestors for so long was either right or necessary. Colet, the famous Dean of St. Paul's, son of a Lord Mayor, was one of twenty-three children, of whom he alone lived to grow up.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the deaths in London largely exceeded the births, amounting to fifty per thousand, and the infant mortality resembled that of India, where even now over a quarter of the babies who are born, die.

As the doctors and sanitary officers stopped the procession of coffins, it became obviously necessary to space the procession of cradles. Sir Bernard Mallet, addressing the Royal Statistical Society in 1917, reported that between 1906 and 1913 the birth-rate in Germany declined 17 per cent, infantile mortality 18 per cent.

In England and Wales the figures were 11 and

18 per cent; in Denmark 11 and 14; in Norway 5 and 6. So the birth-rate began to fall, at first parallel to the falling death-rate, but in recent years rather more steeply.

There are good reasons for thinking that this country is overfull. J. M. Keynes speaks of the danger to society from "the termination of temporarily favourable conditions which permitted the growth of population beyond what could be provided for when these conditions were at an end." That, I fear, is our position.

But the panic-mongers again began to give tongue. Just as a hundred years ago they calculated that if the population continued to grow at its present rate, in two hundred years there would not be standing-room on the earth, so now they calculate that in two hundred years there will be very few Englishmen left.

The cry of race suicide began when our numbers were growing faster than ever before; it has now found an echo even at the British Association, and in a book by Professor Carr-Saunders, our most learned authority on the whole subject. "There is no assurance whatever," he says, "that children will come in numbers sufficient to prevent our ultimate extinction."

Those who are not expert in vital statistics may wonder at this panic when our numbers are still increasing. But it is not disputed that the turning-point will be reached some time between 1940 and

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1950, and that after that we may expect a slow decline.

I do not think that this need trouble us much. But it does trouble three classes of people—old-fashioned theologians, militarists, and “record” fanatics.

I quote from a Roman Catholic Canon, preaching to the British Medical Association in 1922: “The earth has been roomy enough for 6,000 years, and may be for as many to come, if it lasts. If not, the Lord may give us another planet or create a new one.”

The second class is more dangerous. “Strong and healthy nations,” wrote General Bernhardt in 1911, “require new territory for their surplus population. This, as a rule, must be obtained at the cost of its possessors, by conquest, which thus becomes a law of necessity.”

As to the race-suicide scare, I entirely agree with Raymond Pearl, the famous American biologist. “Any idea that man is going to perish because of a temporarily disordered relation between his rate of reproduction and the size of his living quarters seems silly.”

II

HOUSE FULL?

THE National Resources Committee in the United States has just issued a bulky report on population trends. The members of the committee are the leading American experts on the subject. What are their conclusions?

The maximum estimate is that in 1980 the population of the United States, which now numbers 133 millions, will be 158 millions, after which date it will begin to decline. Other members of the committee place the peak as early as 1955, with 138 millions.

Those who have studied the subject will remember that our experts predict that the population of Great Britain will reach its maximum between 1941 and 1950. The result is that the American orators, who used to declare that "we will keep the doors of this haven of refuge open for the downtrodden and oppressed," now slam the door in their face. The notice is no longer "Welcome," but "Beware the Dog."

At first sight this report is very difficult to believe. If 45 million people can live on 85,000 square miles (the area of Great Britain), how many can live on three million square miles, the area of the United States? A little sum for a schoolboy! To be sure,

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there are extensive deserts in America, but in our island the Highlands of Scotland and the hills of North Wales are not able to support a dense population. I am not entirely convinced; but the American experts must have had good reasons for a report which they must have known would be as unpopular as it is startling.

One of the best known among these experts is my friend Professor Raymond Pearl, of Baltimore, whose book, *The Biology of Population Growth*, is in my library. He thinks it is possible to plot out what he calls a logistic curve, which all populations, during a certain "cycle," tend to follow. A period of slow growth is followed by a rapid increase, which then slows down till it passes the hump and begins to descend on the other side.

His estimate for the United States corresponds so closely to the Report of the Committee that I think it probable that his views were accepted by his colleagues. He supports his theory of a curve by many striking examples.

I confess that the theory of a logistic curve seems to me too fatalistic. The discovery of some new cheap and abundant food, or of ways of greatly increasing the yield of cereals, might lead to a sudden increase of numbers like that which raised the population of Ireland to eight million before the potato-famine. But again, I do not like to set my judgment against that of experts.

It seems to be established that the soil of America

is not so fertile as was formerly supposed. For some time, extensive shallow cultivation of large amounts of virgin soil by relatively few men, and cheap transportation of the produce, helped to feed the teeming population of Europe, and caused ignorant persons to boast that Malthus had been refuted. But large tracts of farmland in America are now derelict; the time is approaching when North America will have no food to export.

Professor East, another American authority, says that besides Russia and Rumania, both of which are increasing so rapidly that they cannot be regarded as granaries for the future, there are four great sources of food supply—Australia, Canada, India, and Argentina.

Australia, he thinks, may export food for another 30 years; but the forecast that this continent may support 100 million people he rejects as extravagant. "These worthy people are living on the rim of a soup-plate." Canada must cease to export food at about the same time as Australia. The Argentine will take longer to fill—perhaps 50 years. India should hardly have been mentioned among the big four.

If East is right in thinking that the world is nearing the point where the limitation of food must check the further growth of population, we may wonder both at the alarmist cries of race suicide at home and at the legislation by all the dictators to encourage larger families. The second question, however, is easily answered.

"Whom do you consider the greatest woman?" asked Mme. de Staël of Napoleon. The answer was: "She, madame, who furnishes the most cannon fodder at her country's need." So say Hitler and Mussolini.

Other authorities are not so pessimistic as East about the future of our food supply; but some of them are very anxious about coal, and still more about oil. At the present rate of consumption, which increases every year, the earth's yield of mineral oil will soon be exhausted.

Some of these depressing predictions may not be fulfilled. But one thing seems certain. The swarming period of the white races, which made the nineteenth century unique in history, is now at an end. We must adapt ourselves to a stationary condition in wealth and population. This change will bring with it a revolution in our ways of thinking for which we are not yet prepared.

It will be a shock to realize that there are no countries for a young man to go to if he cannot find a place at table laid for him at home. "The Colonies" were for a hundred years a resource in the background for misfits of all kinds, and for some ambitious men who found golden opportunities in a new country. We no longer seem to breed pioneers, and the Dominions are not eager to welcome young Englishmen. Emigration no longer enters the thoughts of the present generation as an alternative to the dole.

Many of our ideas belong to the period of expansion which has now come to an end. For instance, the duty of saving money, which we old people took almost as a matter of course, is less obvious now that there is a glut of money at the banks, and not many new enterprises to invest in.

In America especially an increase in capital values, natural in a period of expansion, was generally expected, and many, perhaps most, of the great American fortunes were made in this way. Under the New Deal capital gains are to be subject to heavy reductions by taxation—a mode of raising revenue which I think is peculiar to America. But if the population report is right, there will not be much more of these automatic augmentations.

The idea of a law of progress—progress being understood as that kind of advance which can be measured by statistics—has taken so strong a hold on our minds that it will be very difficult to realize that there is no such law, and that the conditions which made us think that there is such a law were necessarily temporary, and exist no longer. The truth, however, is being forced upon us, and it is responsible for much of the unrest among men and classes who had expected a steady improvement in their condition.

Even apart from the terrible menace of war, which I think we shall escape, at any rate while our present Prime Minister is in office, there is a heavy weight of anxiety and disappointment among our

people. The growth of the nation, judged by whatever standard we please, seems to have definitely stopped. The ship of State is in the doldrums.

I do not think that this is necessarily a misfortune. Our ideals have been vulgar and unintelligent. We have mistaken comfort for civilization, and in every relation of life have preferred quantity to quality. We made for ourselves a kind of Deuteronomic religion, in which our litanies were tables of statistics. Because we had loved righteousness, our God had made our prosperity increase "by leaps and bounds."

This simple creed will no longer serve. Our little island has had its day of gross material success. Henceforth we must turn our attention to higher things, and covet for our country those values in which one man's gain is not another man's loss, and which are increased by sharing them.

We must learn to think of the nineteenth century as a strange though not inglorious episode in the history of a country which has been most distinguished as the home and nurse of a lofty idealism, the country of Shakespeare and Milton, of Wordsworth and Shelley, of Tennyson and Browning, and of our great pioneers and discoverers in natural science. This is the Britain which for ages to come will be the spiritual home of the English speaking nations dispersed through the whole world.

I think we have already begun to learn our lesson, but we have much leeway to make up.

III

THE CASE OF MR. BOURNE

THE acquittal of a surgeon for saving a child from the consequences of an abominable outrage will probably lead to an alteration in the law about abortion. It is monstrous that such an action as his should be punishable by a long term of penal servitude.

The decision of the jury will, I think, be approved by all except by those who hold that these questions have been settled once for all by infallible authority.

I should be the last to deny that in morals authority is generally a safer guide than private judgment, but there are exceptions. We have to consider on what grounds authority bases its verdict, and whether these grounds still carry weight for the modern mind.

The reasons usually given for the absolute condemnation of abortion are that to destroy a life which has already begun is murder, and that to kill an unbaptized child is to condemn it to be excluded for ever from heaven, to be cast, as the Greeks taught, into limbo, or with the Latins, including Augustine, into the torment of eternal fire.

Baptism before birth or after death was pro-

nounced invalid, though distracted parents often hoped to save their children from a dreadful fate in this way.

The Roman Church quite consistently forbids a doctor to save a mother's life by the sacrifice of the infant's, though in ordinary practice the obstetrician uses an instrument called a cranioclast when the infant's head is too large for it to be born alive except by the Caesarean operation.

But it is not too much to say that the modern man could not believe in or worship a God who was capable of such cruelty and injustice as to consign an innocent baby to everlasting torture. This argument, therefore, has lost its cogency.

The life of the new individual begins as soon as the ovum is fertilized. There is no point of time at which foeticide first begins to be murder.

Public opinion is so far from regarding the act as murder, that it is resorted to without any scruple, and with a levity which to a Christian is shocking.

Miss Elderton, in her book about Yorkshire and Lancashire towns, found that attempts to terminate pregnancies are exceedingly common. Carr-Saunders is quite mistaken in saying that abortion is not in common use. Julius Wolf estimates the artificial abortions in Germany at 600,000 a year, and Hirsch gives a much larger number for the United States.

The Bolsheviks at first legalized both abortion and homosexual practices. In one year the registered

abortions in Moscow were about equal to the number of births, and, strange to say, hardly a life was lost.

But now the Soviet Government has made an abrupt change. Both these practices are once more crimes, as they are in almost every civilized country. But in the case of abortion, the law seems to be everywhere disregarded with impunity, except that now and then, when the treatment results in the death of the patient, some practitioner is heavily punished and ruined.

This is not a satisfactory state of things. But I cannot agree with those who would like frankly to legalize the practice, on the ground that the parents have a right to decide whether they wish to have a child or not. To destroy a life that has already begun is a serious matter, and to allow abortion might seem logically to justify infanticide. The sanctity of human life has already been seriously impaired by wars and revolutions; we do not want to see this unhappy tendency further extended.

The example of nations which have used as an acknowledged practice this method of regulating their numbers, with or without the help of infanticide, is not encouraging to those who wish to grant complete freedom.

The fate of peoples who have set no store by the lives of their children has not been happy. The aborigines of Tasmania and Australia and the North American Indians have perished or have dwindled

in numbers. And I do not think that any other cause had more to do with the decline and virtual disappearance of the Greeks and Romans than their addiction to abortion and infanticide.

Plato makes Socrates mention abortion casually. "If midwives wish to procure a miscarriage, they do so." Aristotle recommends it when enough children have been born to serve the State.

But infanticide was the more usual method. It was rare for Greek parents to rear more than one daughter.

The upper class Romans under the Empire practised abortion so much that Ovid says, "there are few women nowadays who are willing to be mothers."

So perished two of the finest races who have ever existed.

Anything that diminishes our sense of the sacredness of human life is so far an evil. Nature seems to have wished to humiliate us by the undignified preliminaries of birth and the repulsive after-effects of death. But the intention may have been to wean us from materialism. These grotesque or painful happenings in the world of matter are the sacraments of what is holy and beautiful. The instinct which bids us not to profane them is thoroughly sound.

When sex ceases to be a mystery, to be held "in sanctification and honour," it becomes poisonous. We have only to listen to the recommendations of

men who have treated these problems as if men were only brute beasts, in order to realize what a valuable protection is afforded even by those taboos which seem to have no rational justification. These taboos have saved many peoples from practices the end of which is death.

This must be emphasized. And yet laws were made for man, not man for laws. Both the State and the Church have a dispensing power. It would have been cruel and senseless to force a child of fourteen to bear a child under such horrible circumstances.

Eugenic abortion is not likely to be legalized in this country, though monstrous births are, I believe, quietly nipped in the bud. There are other and better ways of preventing obviously tainted stocks from perpetuating themselves. But I think the principle that "the health of the people is the supreme law" is a sound one. We are trustees for future generations.

The law might quite well lay down, as it does now, the circumstances in which a pregnancy may legally be terminated. But these should include any serious risk to bodily or mental health, and, I think, genuine cases of rape, the test being the conviction of the offender, and cases of incest. Whatever precautions we may take, the unregistered abortionists will still drive a busy trade. We must recognize that a great many people do not think these practices wrong, or if they do, the desire not to have unwanted children overbears their scruples.

THE CASE OF MR. BOURNE

It is a mistake to impose penalties much more severe than public opinion sanctions. The only result is that those concerned will not prosecute, and juries will not convict.

IV

EXPERIMENTS IN COMMUNISM

MOST of us have heard of the Oneida Community, founded by John Humphrey Noyes, that amazing combination of Communism, Christian rigorism and stud-farm eugenics, which for thirty years interested and scandalized the United States as much as Brigham Young's polygamous Society on the shores of the Great Salt Lake.

Now we have an account of Oneida from within, the autobiography of Pierrepont Noyes, one of the sons of the founder (*My Father's House*, John Murray).

The younger Noyes, whose beautiful portrait as a youth is a tribute to eugenic "stirpiculture," has had a very distinguished career in America.

He was the American member of the Rhineland Commission, which was in charge of the military occupation after the war. He co-operated with Sir Harold Stuart, the British member, in a vain attempt to check the brutalities of French policy, and has done good service to his country in many other ways.

The elder Noyes, a pugnacious and opinionated evangelist with great business ability—a very American type—founded the Community at Putney, in Vermont, in 1846. In 1847 they moved to

Oneida Creek, in Madison County, New York. In 1849 the membership was 205.

In 1860 growing prosperity enabled them to build the palatial Community House, where some descendants of the original Perfectionists still live. They canned fruit, peddled skein silk of their own manufacture, and made steel traps for hunters all over the world.

No community has ever carried out the principles of Communism so rigorously. Noyes taught that selfishness was the one cardinal sin, and among the fruits of selfishness was a man's desire to have a wife all to himself. Accordingly, Oneida was theoretically promiscuous, but in practice Noyes superintended the matings, which were arranged always through a third person; courtship was sternly forbidden.

He had theories on eugenics, which he called stirpiculture. Unsuitable unions were made innocuous by a peculiar method of birth-control. So they went on till the members revolted against this part of Plato's "Republic," and in 1879 marriage was allowed and recognized.

There was no intention at first of abandoning Communism, but within a year the whole system collapsed. Oneida was turned into a joint-stock company, with a capital of 600,000 dollars; the shares were equitably divided. In this new form it continued to prosper.

Pierrepoint Noyes describes the communal nurseries, the method of education, the division of

labour among the adults, the rigorous seclusion from "outsiders," and the evening meetings for devotion and discussion. Every member was periodically subjected to the ordeal of "criticism." He (or she) sat silent while the members exposed without mercy his most intimate faults or praised his efforts to overcome them. Noyes summed up, generally kindly.

The children were not unhappy, and indulged in the pranks natural to their age, but their mothers suffered much from being so seldom allowed to see them.

Many people in this country are surprised at the stream of publications expressing sympathy with Communism which pours from the United States, the country where capitalism has won its most resounding triumphs in the unparalleled growth of wealth and population, and in the condition of the wage-earner, which is better than in any European country, even our own.

But, whatever the reasons may be, America has been the happy hunting-ground of experiments in Communism. The number is estimated at about two hundred. They resemble one another in one particular—they have all failed, except the small German "Amana" colony in Iowa, which owns a large tract of land.

The Rappite, or Harmony Society, was founded by George Rapp, a German, towards the end of the eighteenth century. Its members were pledged

to celibacy, in spite of which the community lasted for a century.

It became a tontine, and was bought out in 1903 for four million dollars. The beneficiaries had latterly shown no wish to add to their numbers.

The Shakers, established in 1787, I believe still exist. Thirty years ago nearly a thousand of them were left, owning a hundred thousand acres of land. They are strict celibates; they are governed by an autocratic head, and every action of their lives is most rigorously prescribed. The Rappites were a German community; the Shakers were of English origin.

The Zoar Community lasted more than eighty years. It became a tontine, like the Rappites, and broke up in 1898. After the division the members complained that they had to work harder, but showed a childlike pleasure in owning their own horses and carts.

Cabet's Icaria struggled on for forty years and came to an end in 1875. The founder, a Frenchman, lacked the business qualities of the American Communists.

It is not necessary to follow the fortunes of other experiments. Most of them fared in the same way; to begin with, enthusiasm; then quarrels and dissensions, and the withdrawal of the indispensable guiding hand; finally, either disruption and dissolution or a tontine of wealthy survivors.

Under what conditions, if any, can a Commun-

istic community succeed? We shall not answer the question by studying the Paris Commune of 1871, or Russia to-day.

The rising of the Paris communes was political rather than economic; the "communards" were not necessarily Communists. And as for Russia, to massacre the owners of property and confiscate their possessions is not to establish Communism. So far from abolishing "wage-slavery" (a silly phrase, this, for the essence of wage-earning is that a man may sell his labour without selling himself), Russia has made it universal. Communism there is an article for export, not for home consumption.

So far as the history of these American experiments is any guide they can only succeed, for any length of time, on a religious basis and under a rule of celibacy: in other words, under the conditions of the monasteries.

We must not forget that these religious houses were experiments in Communism, and that they flourished for many centuries. Even now there are some men, and a much larger number of women, who would be quite satisfied to live under rule and renounce the happiness of marriage, if they could be secure of a simple maintenance, without worry and anxiety

A religious basis is almost essential, to help the inmates to be content with an unnatural life, to fill their vacant hours with pious exercises, and to keep them in more or less charitable relations with each

other. There would not be very many candidates for what in Catholic countries is called the religious life, but there ought to be enough monasteries and convents to provide a refuge for gentle souls who want to escape from a competitive society.

Unless the family is abolished, Communism cannot exist. History has made this quite plain. Oneida could survive the birth of children, taken from their parents and reared in communal nurseries; but when marriage was once allowed, private ownership soon followed, and it was noticed that the members gloated over every little purchase that they made.

The greatest mistake that political dreamers make is to suppose that the enthusiasm which can make almost any experiment work for a short time, can be permanent. Revolution is a fever; if the patient does not die of it, his temperature returns to normal, and therewith all the old racial habits re-establish themselves.

"You may drive out Nature with a pitchfork; she will always come back." There is only one natural Communistic group; it consists of husband, wife, and children.

CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH

ONE result of the declining birth-rate—which, by the way, has not declined since 1934—is that the average age of the population gets a little higher every year.

This is not because old people live longer than they did, though this is the usual opinion. In reality the expectation of life at ages over sixty has hardly risen during the last fifty years. But many more reach the age of sixty, and fewer children are born.

While we are speaking of a popular error on a subject on which most people are singularly ill-informed, it may be worth while to mention another.

We often hear that since there are about two millions more women than men in this country, a considerable proportion of women must remain unmarried. Nature has been more thoughtful than this. More boy babies are born than girls; the proportion is something like twenty-one to twenty. But since women show their superiority by living longer than we do, the women of all ages taken together considerably outnumber the men. The difference is most marked in extreme old age. All the centenarians whom I have known have been women.

But between twenty and forty the numbers are practically equal. There is a Jack for every Jill, unless Jack is killed in battle or prefers to remain unmarried.

The average age of the population is rising. We shall no longer be governed by the middle class, but we shall be governed by the middle-aged. This, I think, is a rather consoling reflection. The Greeks had a proverb: "The deeds of the young; the counsels of the middle-aged; the prayers of the old."

I do not want to see the country governed by old beetles like myself, and I am glad that public opinion has come to think the same. When I was young, resignation was one of the rarest of the Christian virtues. A well-paid and decrepit old fellow would say complacently, "I mean to die in harness," which meant that he intended to stick to his emoluments till he was carried out of his official residence feet foremost. Now in most professions a retiring age has been fixed—usually sixty or sixty-five. And where there is none, it is usual for an old man to retire voluntarily. But complaints are still heard that the directors of companies are apt to be senile.

The young may sometimes be a little impatient to see Tommy make room for his—nephew. Fifty-five is too early to put a man on the shelf.

A certain Martha, Lady Gifford, writing in 1690, says that "nobody should make love after forty, nor be in business after fifty."

Thackeray agreed with the first part of this good lady's dictum. "Forty times over let Michaelmas pass; Grizzling hair the brain doth clear; Then you know a boy is an ass, Then you know the worth of a lass, Once you have come to forty year." To which a parodist answered: "Then you propose to each girl you meet, Then you fall in love in the street, Once you have come to sixty year."

But the young! Heaven save us from being governed by them! Of all the manifold stupidities committed by the Conservative Party since the war none was worse than equalizing the franchise by lowering the age for women to twenty-one, instead of raising the age for men to twenty-five.

The processions of seedy boys whom one meets marching under the red flag are voters. The undergraduates who resolved that they would never fight for king or country are most of them voters. A young don said gently to one of them, "Don't you think you might wait till you have taken your degree before setting the world to rights?"

Perhaps, as Lippmann says, they are beginning to lose faith in their own rebellion. "At seven they saw through their parents and characterized them in a phrase. At fourteen they saw through education and dodged it. At eighteen they saw through morality and stepped over it. At twenty-one they discovered that our social system is ridiculous. This looks like the limit."

At twenty, one is on the side of any party that will attack. It is a disease of youth, like mumps and chicken-pox. Young girls call themselves Communists; it is rather becoming at their adorable age.

It has always been so. Wordsworth, Southey and Coleridge, when they were very young, thought of founding a society of 'Pantisocrats' ("all-on-a-level-ists"). Years brought the philosophic mind, and they all three ended as good Tories.

We might suppose that a young man, with all his career before him, would be disposed to play for safety, and that an old man, with nothing to lose, would indulge himself in such diversions as his constitution permits. But it never has been so. It is the young who take risks and play the fool. The old are not really more virtuous. In fact, a kind of sclerosis of the conscience often sets in about fifty. They have come to an understanding with the world, the flesh, and the devil. They will serve them in moderation, but the even tenor of their respectability must not be interfered with. They are often obstructive; which is why I wish to be governed by those who are neither young nor old. Of course it is not a question of years only. Many people reach their second childhood before they have outgrown their first. Some were never young; others are never old. There are some who in the happy words of Sir Thomas Overbury, "feel old age rather by the strength of their soul

than by the weakness of their body." In character this is not uncommon.

The old man or woman who has no private axe to grind, and who takes a wise and unselfish interest in the young, is a charming member of society. If they live long enough, they may have the pleasure of seeing their old ideas and old favourites coming into fashion again. For though the young love to turn their parents' household gods off their pedestals and throw them upon the rubbish heap, they are more tender to the tastes of their grandparents, if only because their parents despised them. We shall be wise not to give away our old Victorian furniture and our copies of old Victorian authors and painters.

A few great men have been still near their best intellectually in advanced old age. Sophocles wrote one of his best plays when he was nearly ninety. Goethe, Victor Hugo, Tennyson, and Browning went on writing well to the end. Plato died pen in hand at eighty. Titian and Michael Angelo retained their genius to old age. Newton "made an important discovery for every one of his eighty-five years." Dandolo, elected Doge of Venice at eighty-four, stormed Constantinople at ninety-four, and died Doge at ninety-seven.

On the other hand, there have been many precocious geniuses, doomed to an early death, who have hurried through their marvellous achievements as if they knew that their time was short.

Not to mention the greatest name of all, Alexander the Great, Raphael, Mozart, Burns, Byron, Shelley, Keats, and Pascal all died before they reached middle age. Mohammed, Shakespeare, and Napoleon were only fifty-two when they died, and the world would have lost nothing if the two last had died five years earlier, at forty-seven, like the great medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas.

Age and youth have to live together, whether they like it or not, and they must try to bear with each other. An old man, when he looks ahead, is very sorry for his children; but they do not seem very sorry for themselves.

VI

THE SERVANT PROBLEM

NOBODY can deny that the plight of ladies who have to run a house is becoming desperate. They run from one registry office to another. They offer preposterous wages. They put up with language from their servants which in any other employment would lead to instant dismissal. They tell their maids that if they wish to go to a cinema they may use their employer's car. They try foreign girls—Austrian, Hungarian, Italian, Swiss, Norwegian.

Finally, they are often driven from house and home and take refuge in an hotel or a bungalow where they do their own household work. The collapse of country house life is due as much to this trouble as to predatory taxation.

In America and the Dominions the situation has been accepted. Only the rich have servants who sleep in the house. Labour-saving inventions have been brought to great perfection, and the houses are small. But how can a young wife, who has her own interests, do the household work and look after her children at the same time?

The working-man's wife, it is true, manages it, but if a girl has been brought up to expect amenities which require some leisure time she cannot do

both, and in thousands of cases the couple decide to have no children.

This is a matter of national importance, for though I am not perturbed by the scare about depopulation, our young middle class couples are not those who ought to be deliberately childless. They are often among the most desirable parents in the country.

Some revolutionary idealists may say that domestic service is degrading. "No man is good enough to be another man's master." But if we are Christians we cannot forget who it was who said that no man is too good to be another man's servant. "Even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

Mutual service is the law of life, and division of labour is the law of civilized life. It is bad economy to oblige a busy professional man, who is just as much a servant in another way, to cook his own meals and black his own boots. The woman, too, has often her own contribution to make to social service; her time is too valuable to be entirely taken up with household drudgery. Rightly or wrongly, she will not consent to sacrifice herself in this way.

The abolition of domestic service is not a practicable solution. Even in Russia the new privileged class keep servants just as their predecessors did under the Tsars.

There are two questions which have to be

answered. The first is, why is a profession which is useful and honourable, well-paid in comparison with the earnings of the average shop-girl or typist, and under present conditions not much hampered by galling restrictions, so unpopular that young people will not enter it?

I suppose the free evening, after working hours, is much valued. But in most households the afternoon and evening-out come frequently enough to satisfy reasonable people, and the old-fashioned mistress who did not allow "followers" is quite extinct. This reason is plainly insufficient to account for the present state of things.

We can only conclude that there is a social prejudice against domestic service; that a girl who is not ashamed to stand behind a counter thinks it derogatory to answer a bell. There is in fact a lingering flavour of servile associations in domestic service which is resented in a democratic age.

There may be some mistresses who have not quite forgotten the old relations between employer and employed; if so, they are being taught their lesson. For the most part the master and mistress are much more considerate and courteous than the boss and the shop-walker in a store or factory.

The second question is whether any remedy can be found. I have a suggestion to make, which I hope may be thought worth considering.

When we had young children we once employed

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a "Princess Christian" nurse. This institution trained nurses and found places for them. It fulfilled the triple function of a training college, registry office, and trade union for the help and protection of those in service. The nurses wore a uniform and were to be addressed as "Miss X."

If I were a millionaire I think I should found a college, or rather a chain of colleges, for the training of domestic servants on the same lines. I should try to bring in mainly the daughters of poor professional men, clergymen, clerks, schoolmasters, and the like.

There are thousands of this class competing for poorly-paid jobs, as those know who have advertised for secretaries, typists, or ladies' companions. Why should they not take much better paid posts as cooks or parlour maids?

I should get some ladies to design a perfectly sweet uniform for them. The girls would be treated in the same way as governesses, typists, or secretaries. They would be "Miss X" until they and their employers had come, by mutual agreement, to Christian name terms. They would have their own sitting-room, but they would have the freedom of the living-rooms and the garden.

If the colleges were large, the management would be able to send out a whole household together—cook, parlourmaid, and housemaid. This would meet an obvious difficulty in carrying out my scheme.

I wonder whether any rich man will be moved to try this experiment. The initial expense, in building the colleges, would be considerable, but when they were once started they would pay their own way, since the pupils would do all the house-work, and the mistresses would be quite willing to pay large fees to be quit of their troubles.

In a few years the social prejudice of which I have spoken would be broken down, and it would be as natural for a girl to go into service for a few years as to become a typist or secretary, or to work in a shop.

The employers are no doubt paying the penalty for their slowness in adjusting themselves to an era of social equality. The conditions of domestic service a hundred years ago were such as no self-respecting person could accept now.

But so, for the matter of that, was the way in which the family lawyer, the family doctor, and the parson of the parish were treated when they came to the "great house." They were usually sent to eat in the housekeeper's room.

In 1807 Lady Carlisle felt it impossible to speak to so humble a person as the local medical practitioner, and said to her "woman," "Inform the doctor that he may bleed the Countess of Carlisle" (*Young's Early Victorian England*).

The same authority says that in London houses "the servants' accommodation was scandalous. Footmen slept two or three or four in a small pantry

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on truckle-beds. A Victorian town mansion had the kitchen, pantry, servants' hall, housekeeper's room, and butler's and footmen's bedrooms in a small cellar, lighted and ventilated by panes of glass set high up against the ceiling."

So the follies of the parents are visited on the children to the third and fourth generation. But I think our difficulties will adjust themselves after a time.

The establishment of social equality is impeded by shyness on both sides; the employee is often more embarrassed than the employer. We are of course in a period of transition. Archbishop Howley, a hundred years ago, kept about thirty men-servants; his present successor, I dare say, is content with three or four.

The old great house must go the way of the feudal castle; but I do not think we shall be driven to dispense with domestic service altogether, nor do I think that such a change would be an improvement.

VII

MILITARISM AND SURVIVAL VALUE

SIR ARTHUR KEITH has given his blessing to an interesting book by an amateur anthropologist, Mr. Alfred Machin (*Darwin's Theory Applied to Mankind*). Mr. Machin thinks that he has found the key to human development.

Man has been solitary and silent for a vastly longer period than he has been social and articulate. He began, not as a social being, but as a lonely hunter, accompanied only by his family.

The qualities which he acquired, because they had a survival value, during these myriads of years, were those of the carnivorous animals, which are all solitary hunters except the wolves. (Lions have lately taken to living in small groups, a change of habit the reason of which is unknown.)

The hunting tribe is a later development. It began when the competition for hunting grounds became keen: the lonely hunter was soon driven off. With this change, a new set of qualities came to have a survival value—obedience, discipline, self-sacrifice for the pack or tribe.

These qualities were entirely contrary to the instincts of the solitary hunter, and a severe conflict of motives was set up.

Further changes came about with the domesti-

cation of animals—in North America there were none that could be tamed, and in South America only the llama—the beginnings of agriculture, and then the discovery that it paid better to enslave prisoners of war than to kill and eat them. This last change made it possible for the slave-owners to be fighting men, pure and simple; society was divided into two classes, soldiers and workers. Finally, it was discovered that forced labour is bad labour, and the workers were allowed, or won for themselves, the opportunity to better their position by skill and industry; in this way modern civilization began.

All through history, man has been torn in two directions by two very primitive sets of qualities—those of the solitary hunter, which are the oldest and most deeply rooted, and those of the social animal. More recently, a conflict has arisen between the instincts of the warrior and those of the peaceful law-abiding citizen. All through, there has been a natural selection of the type best fitted to survive. At present, a nation which wishes to survive must cultivate both the fighting qualities, which Mr. Machin calls the first morality, and the peaceable, bourgeois virtues which he calls the second morality.

With the cynicism which characterizes his point of view throughout, Mr. Machin thinks that the rulers of a State pretend, out of pure hypocrisy, to support the second morality, while guiding all their actions by the first. Their chief tool is religion.

He quotes Napoleon: "What I see in religion is social order. It associates with heaven an idea of equality, which prevents the poor from massacring the rich." If this is the function of religion, the trick will soon be found out, and the "massacre" will begin, as in Russia and Spain.

Our author, having no hope from religion, has no expectation that wars will ever cease. We must evolve—or rather, he would say, Nature will evolve for us—a fighting industrialist, who will first outwork his rivals and then slaughter them.

At the bottom of this philosophy of history there seems to be the assumption that evolution is necessarily a beneficent thing. It is our old friend the law of progress, the last of the great Western heresies, as a Catholic divine calls it.

Darwin may have believed in it, as Herbert Spencer certainly did; but it is no part of real Darwinism. The doctrine of evolution is not that the strongest must be the best, or that the ideas which prevail must be the right ideas. All that Darwin taught was that the fate of species is determined by natural selection. "We dined as a rule on each other; What matter, the toughest survived." This gives us no criterion of value whatever.

There is no reason why instincts which had a survival value ten thousand years ago should have a survival value now. Nature gives many examples of blind alleys. The dinosaurs specialized in size, and some of them were armour-plated; but after

a long innings they disappeared, partly because they had no more brains than a rabbit, and partly because they had no machinery to regulate their body temperature.

Man has had a great career, so far; but his nearest cousins, the anthropoid apes, have been conspicuous failures; there are only three kinds of them left, and they are in danger of extinction.

The predatory animals, who practise what this book calls the first morality, are being everywhere destroyed because they are a nuisance. In the animal world, it is the meek, the sheep, cows, pigs, and dogs, who possess the earth—under their masters, who cannot be called meek. In a world where the huge brontosaurus and the stately mammoth have vanished, the cockroach, the bug, and the microbe have survived.

But our author is not only confident that “freedom is final and has come to stay”—which shows a very robust faith just now; he protests against the idea that the world can ever come to an end.

Christianity, he says, is “no inspiring gospel for warriors,” and therefore it is useless in a world where there must always be wars. But is it certain that there must always be wars? There were no wars till the hunters turned into social animals. There probably was a time when militarism had a survival value, but in historical times it has ruined those nations which delighted in war. The Greeks exterminated each other in the storms in a

teacup which they called their wars. The Romans dwindled when they became a predatory people. (Another cause is mentioned on page 209.)

Wars always destroy the best part of a nation; they have probably retarded progress more than any other cause. The instincts which lead to war are atavistic; they have no longer any survival value.

So far from Christianity being an outworn attempt to establish an impossible and suicidal code of morals, it points forward to what may be the morality of the future. The racial habits against which it contends—pugnacity, acquisitiveness, and revenge—are all anti-social and mischievous, as we nearly all admit in theory.

We may say, if we will, that natural selection is slowly producing a new type of man, better fitted to live in the world of the future. But he will not be a compound of the “first and second moralities”—pugnacity and acquisitiveness—he will have got beyond them both. So, at least, we hope; but we have no right to assume that humanity is on the up-grade. In any case, when we compare the length of time since civilization began—about ten thousand years ago—with the immense period when our ancestors were still sub-human, we must expect that progress will be painfully slow.

There is, however, one reflection which this method of approach suggests with great force. Some of our revolutionary idealists want to abolish

at a blow the four strongest human institutions—the family, religion, the nation, and private property.

The Russians have gone through their Communist revolution, and have come out on the other side. But the young intellectuals of the West still think that such an upheaval of society is not only desirable but possible.

And yet anyone who studies human nature as a branch of natural history must see that such a reversal of historical evolution would be a biological, not a political, change. It would be the kind of sudden change which never happens or could happen. The most deeply rooted of our racial habits, whether we call them good or bad, forbid it.

Mechanized collectivism is a possible form of society, certainly; it even exists. Our species decided against it a very long time ago, when we made up our minds, or had them made up for us, to be men, and not social insects.

VIII

TORTURE COMES BACK

THE Howard League, which exists to promote humane reforms in prison administration, has lately issued a most startling report. "No one who examines the evidence can doubt that actually the use of torture is more widespread to-day than it was half a century ago; the evil is not extinct but is growing."

Who thirty years ago could have believed such a thing?

By torture they do not mean cruel punishments, but (according to a definition by a medieval writer on Roman law) "a kind of inquisition made for the purpose of tearing out the truth by torments and bodily pain." This is the practice which has increased in the last fifty years, and is still growing.

There is no mention of judicial torture in the Old Testament, and I read that it is not referred to in the early laws of India or China. But it was used by the Egyptians and Assyrians, and in Greece and Rome it was regularly applied to slaves. The only check upon this cruelty was that the owner of the slave (not, of course, the slave himself or herself) might claim damages in case of permanent disablement.

St. Augustine, and the Digest of Justinian, admit that torture is a most unsatisfactory method of eliciting the truth, but do not suggest its abolition. Against charges of treason and heresy, free birth conferred no exemption from torture.

In the Middle Ages these cruelties became much worse. "The extraordinary ingenuity of the medieval tortures," says Lecky, "and the extent to which they were elaborated by the clergy, are well shown in an article by Villegitte." Marsilius of Bologna, who wrote an elaborate book on the subject in 1529, boasted that he had invented the deprivation of sleep as a torture.

No one could recommend the perusal of such books—it would be about the most unwholesome occupation that could be imagined; but it is worth while to spend half an hour in the old dungeon at The Hague, where all the instruments of torture are in working order, ready for use. To see such a place makes a more vivid and lasting impression than any verbal description.

Until lately the visitor was likely to say as he came out, "Well, there can be no doubt about the reality of progress, at least in one direction. It is inconceivable that this sort of thing can ever occur again."

In England, torture was always illegal, but it was often employed, especially in ecclesiastical courts, and witches were horribly tormented all over Europe. Guy Fawkes, as readers of Harrison

Ainsworth will remember, was ingeniously tortured; his trembling signature is on view at the Record Office. The two Jameses were experts in the art; James I used to superintend personally the application of the "boot," which is described in Scott's *Old Mortality*.

The extinction of torture on the Continent has been dated 1740 for Prussia, 1776 for Portugal, 1786 for Sweden, 1789 for France, and 1801 for Russia. These dates do not quite agree with Beccaria's famous book in 1764, which is supposed to have had a great effect in arousing the public conscience. He found that England, Sweden, and Prussia were the only countries in which witnesses were not examined by torture.

In France, eloquent protests had been made by Montaigne, Bayle, Voltaire, and others, but the law was not changed till the revolution in 1789, which at once abolished the abominable practice.

Continental critics have been heard to say that though we have abolished judicial torture, the English system of cross-examination is itself a refined torture, which a continental judge would stop at once.

Some barristers seem to enjoy tormenting hostile witnesses, like the late Lord Carson, who, wishing to discredit a bottle-nosed witness, asked him. "Should I be wrong in describing you as a heavy drinker?" "That's my business," said the witness sulkily. "So I see; but have you any other?" There

are more ways than one of "putting a man to the question."

There are two differences between the old legal system of torture, which has long been abolished in all civilized countries, and the revival of illegal cruelty towards accused persons which is deplored by the Howard League.

Torture used to be part of the trial; now, whether it be the "third degree" of American prisons or similar devices elsewhere, it is the work of the police, who wish if possible to secure a conviction. This is an abuse which it should be easy to stop. The shorter the time of detention between the arrest and the trial the better.

The other difference is that the cases where torture is now used are mainly alleged political offences, and the countries where it is employed are those in which liberty has been suppressed. In other words, torture, as now practised, is one of the methods of a terrorist government. The object is sometimes to extort confessions, sometimes to show the people what a very dangerous thing it is to incur the displeasure of the government.

The first instance that I can remember was in connection with the Ferrer trial at Barcelona. The prisoners at Monjuich were undoubtedly tortured.

Now these barbarities are employed in Italy. but not, I believe, with any excess of cruelty; in Germany, where the men in the concentration

camps have been savagely beaten; and in Russia, where the ridiculous confessions which are part of the stage machinery of trials for counter-revolutionary activities must surely be extorted by horrible treatment in prison.

This sinister reversion to barbarism is very surprising to us, because horror of cruelty is the strongest moral sentiment that we have.

How then can human nature have suddenly become so much worse, as it seems to have done in some foreign countries which we looked upon as our friendly rivals in civilization?

I have no doubt that the Great War accustomed men to scenes of death and suffering, and introduced a harsher tone into human society. But it is unhappily also true that our humanity is only skin deep.

If we saw such horrors as have been common in some countries in and since the war, our sensibilities would very soon be blunted. There is hardly any other part of human nature in which the most shocking depravity lies so little below the surface.

But in political trials, which have occasioned the worst brutalities, we must remember that the terrorists are themselves in terror. "He who rides on a tiger can never dismount," says a Chinese proverb. And they have schooled themselves to believe that what used to be called reasons of State justify any cruelty and any treachery. Such govern-

ments stick at nothing; right and wrong have no meaning for them.

It will take a long peace to obliterate the legacy of the Great War and the revolutions which followed it. Meanwhile, the report of the Howard League must make every decent man ashamed of the generation in which it is his fate to live.

I can remember a rather absurd play in which an early Christian was brought in to be very mildly tortured on the stage. My neighbours sprang from their seats with cries of "Shame! Stop that!" and the scene had to be cut out. This was in the reign of good Queen Victoria.

IX

WHAT ARE THE WORST FAULTS?

It is very interesting to trace the changes of moral standards in the history of European civilization. These changes have been very great; but because they have come about gradually and quietly, they have not attracted so much attention as they deserve.

If I had to sum up the morality of the ancient Greeks, I should choose two maxims, "Render to all their dues," and "Nothing too much." The first made Justice the fundamental virtue, and included the duty of punishing an enemy. Pride or insolence, they had observed, goeth before a fall. Man must know his place. The second was emphasized by Aristotle. Courage is the mean between cowardice and rashness, generosity the mean between stinginess and prodigality, piety the mean between atheism and superstition. Very sensible, but a rather dreary view of life.

Plato, who was as much and as little a typical Athenian as his disciple Ruskin was a typical Victorian Englishman, wished to establish an inquisition, with the ominous name of the Nocturnal Council. It was to punish those who denied the existence of the gods, those who believed that they are not interested in human affairs, and those who taught that they may be bought off, through

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their courtiers, by gifts and sacrifices. Atheists, Epicureans, and (a militant Protestant might say) Catholics.

Roman morality may be summed up in two lines. "Put the interests of your country first, those of your parents second, your own third and last."

The Gospels are a protest against the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, which consisted of rules of conduct, sometimes wise, sometimes absurd, but always rules.

Two questions are raised. Ought religion to be a code of rules or a life of freedom? Ought religion to be rigorist and world-renouncing, or humanist and world-embracing?

The Gospels are all for freedom, "Love and do what you like," as Augustine put it. Rigorism and humanism stand side by side in the Gospels; how to reconcile them is a difficult question, not for this place. But formalism, with its catalogues of sins, arrayed in order of demerit, is quite alien to our Lord's method.

Certain types of character made Him very indignant, but He always looked at the heart, the motives, rather than at their expression in action. He was tolerant, if He saw that the will was set in the right direction. This made Him lenient to the merely disreputable sins, of which the sinner himself is ashamed, and very severe to the deliberately anti-social conduct of strong characters.

He hated hypocrisy, which means, quite literally,

wearing a mask. The man of the world almost always wears a mask. This is a very far-reaching condemnation; how far it reaches we can all think out for ourselves.

He hated hard-heartedness and want of sympathy. If love or charity is the greatest of virtues, its absence must be the worst of sins. And He hated calculating worldliness, the character of the selfish, scheming careerist. The three are of course closely connected.

When we turn our eyes to the Church two hundred years later, we find the most extraordinary change. Legalism has come back in a flood. Sins are tabulated, and divided into venial and deadly. The former do not need penance; for the latter graduated penalties are prescribed. Three classes of offenders are expelled from the Church without hope of pardon, and "outside the Church there is no salvation." Tertullian says that even Christ cannot plead for their forgiveness. And what are these three unpardonable crimes? Murder, adultery, and apostasy. One cannot help wondering what these rigorists made of the earthly Christ's pardon of "the woman who was a sinner," and of the adulteress in St. John's Gospel.

Tertullian is not quite a fair example to take, and the excessive severity which he favoured was not, because it could not be, carried out in full against carnal offenders; but we may take it that these three—murder, adultery, and apostasy—

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were regarded by the Church at large as the worst sins.

St. Basil suggests a penance of thirty years for unwitting offences against the seventh commandment; eleven years for unpremeditated manslaughter; twenty for wilful murder, and lifelong penance for apostasy. While under penance, a man might not marry or, if married, live with his wife, he was not allowed to undertake military service or business enterprise; he was practically treated like a leper. It is no wonder that some committed suicide.

The medieval Penitentials are amazing reading. The cut-and-dried, rule of thumb procedure, the strange standard of relative guilt, the ferocity of the penalties, and the almost incredible grossness of some of the sins, are equally bewildering. For instance, in the Penitential of Egbert of York, quoted by K. E. Kirk in his *The Vision of God*: "Have you eaten on fast-days before the hour? Have you indulged in idle or loose thoughts in church? Have you spoken lustful words? Seven years' penance, three of them on bread and water."

For many centuries chastity was the one cardinal virtue of a man or woman who wished to take religion seriously. The language used by several Fathers of the Church is unquotable, and poles apart from anything in the New Testament.

To give one very mild example, that most unpleasant saint, Jerome, when a young lady lost her

husband seven months after marriage, exclaims: "Unlucky woman, to have lost both the crown of virginity and the pleasures of wedlock."

These notions are of course far from extinct in the Catholic Church, but the convenient recognition of two standards, a pass degree for the majority, and an honours course for those who wish to be perfect, prevents the clash between medieval and modern standards from being felt too acutely.

Perhaps the most astonishing thing in all ecclesiastical codes of morality is the absence of any condemnation of cruelty. Nothing shows in stronger light the greatness of the change from ecclesiastical to humanist ethics.

The modern layman has repudiated the ascetic view of the Church about sex; personally I think his laxity has gone too far; apostasy he hardly regards as a sin at all. If a man cannot accept the teaching of the Church, he may be mistaken, but he is only exercising the right of private judgment. To say that a man will be damned for not belonging to one particular Church or sect seems to us arrogant and blasphemous.

But cruelty is, to the modern man, absolutely unpardonable. Even those who theoretically deny the vindictive view of punishment, would generally vote gladly for flogging or executing kidnappers and torturers of children, and would show no mercy to those who have been guilty of gross cruelty

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to animals, who, according to the Latin Church, have no souls and therefore no rights.

Next to cruelty, the modern man hates the complex of qualities which make up the character of the *cad*. The *cad* is mean, cowardly, and untruthful; he has no sense of honour, and takes unfair advantages; he is a false friend and a treacherous enemy. In every relation of life he contradicts the character of the gentleman, which is no longer a class distinction but a national ideal.

Humanist morality seems to me to be nearer to the New Testament than the teaching and practice of the medieval Church. Its standard of values is confused and secular, but even if it goes no further than Lindsay Gordon's lines:

Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stone—
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in our own,

I think our Saviour might have said to one professing it, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

HISTORY

I

A MODEL FOR DICTATORS

ON September 23, 63 B.C., two thousand years ago, was born the most successful of all dictators, a perfect model for Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler, Ataturk, and their lesser imitators.

His name was Gaius Octavius; he belonged to a middle-class Italian family, but his mother was a daughter of Julia, sister of the great Julius Caesar, who adopted him, in consequence of which his name became Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, and the Octavian family were made patricians; received a coat-of-arms, we may say.

He was in his nineteenth year when his uncle was murdered; but if ever a man had an old head on young shoulders it was the new Caesar.

The sole consul after the murder was Mark Antony, who seemed to have the ball at his feet. Caesar fought with him, then made friends with him in the campaign against the assassins of Julius, and divided the Empire with him, leaving him to play the despot in the East, solaced by the charms of Queen Cleopatra, while he turned his attention to Italy, Spain, and Gaul.

The rivals came to blows at Actium, where Antony's fleet was destroyed, and Egypt left help-

less to the conqueror. The sequel is known to all readers of Shakespeare, some of whom are unaware that even Shakespeare could not improve upon the last scene as told by Plutarch.

The loot of the immense treasures of the Ptolemys enabled Caesar to pay off his large army; for even then the Roman soldiers blackmailed their commanders, and would only fight in return for lavish promises. And so began, in 31 B.C., what is usually called the reign of Augustus Caesar. Augustus was a title which had a sort of religious solemnity. But he was never called King, or even Emperor, except as commander-in-chief of the army. All through his life he was known as "Princeps," otherwise "il Duce" or "der Führer." He had no court, but lived like a wealthy nobleman, mixing in Society, and even "asking" that his candidates for office might be favourably considered. We may be sure that they were. He was not guarded like a modern dictator.

The Republican constitution, which had worked fairly well when Rome was a small State, had broken down completely long before the battle of Actium. In the last half century of its authority it had been necessary five times at least to place all power in the hands of a single man, because the Senate could not make itself obeyed.

A long series of civil wars, followed by massacres of the adherents of the losing side, had made the citizens ready to accept almost any government

which could undertake to restore peace and keep order.

But the Romans were constitutional lawyers. They could not tolerate any abrupt breach of precedent. Julius had been careless of forms, and had lost his life. His cautious, long-headed nephew, who had now reached the age at which Alexander died, would not make this mistake. Without moving a muscle, he "transferred the State to the authority of the Senate and Roman people," and laid down the title of "Triumvir for establishing the State," as a sign that the crisis was over.

He never forgot that, as a wise Frenchman said, you can generally win if you are careful not to triumph. He walked warily and slowly.

In 23 B.C. he declined to hold the consulship again, but received the "proconsular power" for life. He already held the "tribunician power" for life, which made him officially the protector of the common people, invested his person with "sacredness," and gave him the right to propose laws, and to veto those proposed by anyone else. The proconsular power made him head of the army, and almost all the commanders were nominated by him.

Not till 12 B.C., when Lepidus died, did he become Pontifex Maximus. Till then, "Duce" and Pope existed side by side.

His household troops were the ten thousand praetorian guards, who were kept in Italy, while

the rest of the army was encamped on the frontiers; but he never planted a praetorian camp just outside Rome, a deadly mistake of his successors.

He was so careful not to destroy the prestige of the Senate that he left the government of the quieter provinces of the Empire in their hands, and allowed them to retain their own treasury.

His policy towards the Senate was very like that of Mussolini to the poor King of Italy, who when he was asked what he thought of the Abyssinian adventure is said to have replied: "If Mussolini brings it off, I suppose I shall be Emperor of Abyssinia; if he fails, I hope I may be King of Italy!"

Most dictators come to grief over their selection of Ministers. Either they deliberately choose mediocrities, or they become jealous and afraid of the Grand Vizier, and end by "sending him the bowstring."

Napoleon employed Talleyrand and Fouché, who were clever enough; but he knew they would betray him, and they did. Augustus chose two very able men, who were perfectly loyal—Agrippa and Maecenas.

He had only one bad setback, near the end of his life. The Mediterranean was now a Roman lake, and he was safe from attack on the South, protected by the Sahara, and on the West, protected by the Atlantic. The great danger from the East was in the future. But on the North the scientific

frontier was not the long wavy line of the Rhine and Danube, but the much shorter line of the Elbe and Morava. This pointed to the conquest and annexation of a great part of Germany. It would have been difficult, but not impossible, and the Germans might have accepted Latin civilization as readily as the Gauls and Spaniards. But Quintilius Varus, Augustus's general, allowed his whole army to be destroyed in a forest by the German chief "Arminius," whose real name I suppose was Hermann. Augustus characteristically resolved to cut his losses, and gave up his design.

Two remarks may be made in conclusion. This prototype of all great dictators cleaned up the Augean stable magnificently. He not only "found Rome brick and left it marble," but he stopped the ruthless plunder of the provinces by cruel and incompetent governors like Verres, and policed the capital, which had been terrorized by gangsters like Clodius and Milo.

No one but a dictator could have done it.

Secondly, when he died in his bed at the age of seventy-six, his work did not fall to pieces. The Roman Empire in the West lasted nearly five centuries; its Byzantine offshoot lasted till 1453, or, in Russia, till 1917.

II

HOW ROME DEALT WITH CHRISTIANS

A SHORT time ago I helped with my pen to celebrate the two-thousandth anniversary of the birth of Augustus Caesar, the most successful of all dictators, and the founder of the Roman Empire.

Let us now take another dip into Roman history, a hundred years later, when we shall find that Empire at its zenith in extent, wealth, and power.

The Emperor is Trajan, no scion of the Julian house, nor even an Italian, but a Spanish officer designated by the Emperor Nerva as his successor.

If a Sovereign is to govern as well as reign, adoption is probably the best way of securing a competent man for the post. Trajan more than justified Nerva's choice; but, considering what we are told of his private habits, it is surprising that he was the only pagan to escape eternal punishment. He was rather grudgingly taken out of hell in answer to a prayer of Pope Gregory the Great, who was warned at the same time that he must not pray for a pagan again. Dante found him in Paradise among the spirits of the blest, where he must have thought that he was in rather odd company.

The most interesting document for the social life of well-to-do Italians at this time is the corre-

spondence of the younger Pliny. I fear that these letters were written with a view to publication.

We are meant to infer that Pliny was a very fine gentleman who munificently founded and endowed a public school at Como, his native town, who had an exquisite taste in the fine arts and landscape gardening, who appreciated beautiful scenery like Thomson or Wordsworth, who discharged his public duties with admirable conscientiousness, who was an affectionate husband, a faithful friend and a kind master, and who allowed his untitled guests to drink his best wine.

Just so might an eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century magnate be described by his biographer. All through we are reminded of society in England about the time of Creevey's diary.

The wealth of the upper class at this time is amazing. We hear of fortunes of two, three, and even four millions sterling, and money went much farther in those days.

Sometimes it was in the hands of an ineffable bounder, like Trimalchio, as described by Petronius, sometimes it was gracefully dispensed by a gentleman like Pliny, who probably regarded himself as only fairly well off. How very modern the following letter sounds:

"I want your advice. The property adjoining mine is for sale. There are pros and cons. I like the idea of having my land in a ring-fence, and I could put both in charge of the same agent and

bailiff. The soil is good, and should promise a steady, though not a large return.

“On the other hand, it might be unwise to put all my eggs into one basket. Also, I must stock it with trustworthy and therefore expensive slaves, for I will not have chained gangs; nobody does about here.

“The price is £30,000. It used to be worth £50,000, but now it is hard to get tenants, and farming is depressed. As for finding the money, I am almost all in land, but I have a few investments, and I could borrow if necessary.”

When Pliny was about fifty Trajan made him governor of the province of Bithynia-Pontus, the northern part of Asia Minor. It was considered a rather difficult province, and Trajan had taken it away from the Senate in order to put his own man in command.

Either the circumstances were peculiar, or Pliny must have tried Trajan's patience considerably by trifling questions. For instance, he writes to the Emperor to ask whether the 150 firemen of Nicomedia should be allowed to form a union.

But in his second year of office he came up against a much bigger problem than he realized. The following, rather compressed, is his account of his difficulty:

“I have had no experience in trials of Christians, and do not know what the custom is. My practice is to ask the accused whether they are Christians.

If they confess I repeat the question twice more, with a warning of the capital penalty. Whatever they may have done, such pig-headed obstinacy deserves punishment.

“An anonymous placard was posted, with a long list of names. Those who worshipped your image and the effigies of the gods and cursed Christ, I discharged, for real Christians, it is said, cannot be made to do these things. They maintain, however, that their guilt or folly amounts only to this, that on a fixed day they meet before sunrise and repeat in alternate verses a hymn to Christ as a god.

“Then they bind themselves, not to do anything wrong, but not to steal, nor to commit adultery, nor to break faith; after which they meet again and partake of ordinary food. They have ceased to do even this since I told them you have forbidden all associations.

“I tortured two maid-servants, who were called “deaconesses,” but could get nothing out of them except degrading superstition. Great numbers are imperilled, so I have decided to ask your advice.”

The Emperor's answer is interesting on many grounds. Our Government offices are seldom so terse and to the point.

“Trajan's compliments to Pliny. My dear Pliny, You have acted quite correctly in sifting the cases of those brought before you as Christians. No general rule can be made which can establish a fixed form of procedure.

“They are not to be hunted out. If they are charged and convicted, they must be punished; but if anyone says that he is not a Christian, and makes the fact certain by invoking our gods, no matter what the suspicions are about his past, he shall be pardoned on his repentance.

“Anonymous accusations are never to be received; they are of very objectionable precedent, contrary to the spirit and practice of our age.”

Some have seen in this correspondence a confirmation of the view that the legal position of the Christians was that of outlaws. That is not my opinion.

Trajan, afraid, like all absolute rulers, of associations which might become political, had forbidden them all, even the small trade union of firemen. Pliny was convinced that the Christian Church came under this regulation, and ordered its members to disband. But he dislikes having to send to execution a number of men and women who seemed to him perfectly harmless, and so, if we read between the lines, he hints that Trajan might relax his rule in this case.

Trajan refuses to do this, but indicates in what ways it can be made to press less hardly on the Christians. After this letter, there were probably very few more executions of Christians in Bithynia-Pontus.

We should make a great mistake if we supposed that the “persecutions” were at all like the Spanish

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Inquisition or the recent massacres of Christians in Russia and Spain. The Roman Government was tolerant, but it could not understand the obstinate refusal of conventional tokens of respect to the State and its institutions. Later on, it is true, it became afraid of a great society which threatened to be a rival to the State. When things have reached that pitch, a concordat between Church and State is the only solution. This is what is known as the conversion of Constantine, after the failure of the last persecution under Diocletian.

III

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE CHRISTIANS

I HAVE been tempted to follow up my essay on Augustus, the most successful of all dictators, by pen sketches of three later emperors who had to deal with the problem of Christianity.

We have seen how Trajan advised the Governor of Bithynia to act. The Christians, it seems, were an obscure sect of foolish fanatics, probably harmless enough, but obstinate and contumacious. If they refused to obey the law, pity would be wasted upon them.

Fifty years have passed. The throne is occupied by another Spaniard, very unlike Trajan.

Marcus Aurelius was a saint, or, in ancient language, a philosopher.

Plato, in despair of other forms of government, thought that the best chance was to make a philosopher a king or a king a philosopher. Unfortunately, saints and philosophers on the throne have been complete failures.

Private vices are not, as Mandeville thought, public benefits; but private virtues are sometimes public nuisances.

Marcus was no exception. He immortalized himself by writing one of the great books of the world, his *Journal Intime*; *To Himself* was the title

he gave it. But as an emperor he was not a success.

His education was entirely bookish. He watched over the purity of his soul like a monk in the cloister. He used to read a book during the races in the Circus and at the dinner-table.

He embraced the Stoical philosophy, which taught that autocrats ought to be murdered and that "all things external" (our own misfortunes and those of others) are indifferent to the wise man.

Everyone in Rome knew that the Empress Faustina was unfaithful to her husband. Marcus thanks heaven for a wife "so obedient, affectionate, and simple," and ordered that divine honours should be paid to her.

He bequeathed the empire to his son Commodus, an unmitigated blackguard with the tastes of a prize-fighter.

It was not his fault that the empire was devastated by barbarian invasions and more than decimated by plague. He wrote his book in camp, desperately unhappy, but resigned to the will of heaven, and glad when his call came. "Depart then content, for He who releases thee is content."

This is the man who was the worst persecutor that the Church had known.

The hero of modern agnostics was absurdly superstitious. He threw two lions into the Danube to propitiate heaven, and was attended by sorcerers on his campaigns.

By his orders, Christians were banished to convict settlements, tortured and executed, over the greater part of the empire. The martyrdoms in the amphitheatre at Lyons were, as we know, approved by Marcus. The scenes then enacted are perhaps the most disgusting exhibition of diabolical cruelty that history records. Here and elsewhere the trouble was started, not by the magistrates, but by the hatred of the populace, who gloated over the torments of the girl Blandina and the little boy Ponticus.

It is really interesting to ask why the Christians were so detested at this time.

I agree with other scholars who have said that the Church was at its very best in the second century, purer than it was in St. Paul's churches, and far simpler and less worldly than it afterwards became.

The "apologies" of Christian writers in this period seem to have spoken no more than the truth. Impartial observers were most impressed by the affection of Christians for each other, and (like the famous physician Galen) by the purity of their lives. One would have thought that they would be as much respected as the Quakers are among us. What was there about them that aroused such frantic hatred?

It was not religious zeal on behalf of the Olympian gods. Pater in his fine novel, *Marius the Epicurean*, has shown how a gentle and cultivated piety might

still cling to the old-world sacrifices and ceremonies; but there was no real faith left in Juno, Mars, and Minerva, and paganism had seldom been intolerant. Nor did the oriental cults meddle much with Christianity. It is often said that the trials of the Christians were really for high treason. The Christians would not pay divine honours to the Emperor. There is some truth in this; but it must be remembered that the Jews were never compelled to sacrifice, and that the Christians were always ready to show their loyalty by praying for the Emperor. The sacrificial test was chosen as the simplest which was known to be effective, as a Jew might be convicted by requiring him to eat pork, or a Roman Catholic beef on Friday.

The real charge against the Christians was that they were anti-social. They began very early to claim to be "a holy nation, a peculiar people." They emphasized their special privileges in the sight of God in a way which did not make them popular.

The pagans took them at their word, and, according to Justin (one of the victims of Marcus), exclaimed, "Go and kill yourselves; begone to God at once and leave us in peace!"

So the pagans began to speak of the Christians as "the third race," the Jews being the second. The Jews were hated but tolerated as having national customs; the Christians were equally exclusive, without the same excuse. The name

“third race” was as opprobrious as if one talked of a third sex. “A skulking tribe who shun the light of day, silent in public, talkative in holes and corners. They recognize each other by secret signs, and love each other before they are acquainted. Why have they no temples, no sacred images?”

Such was the language of the pagans. A fairly close parallel is the hatred of the Nazi Germans for the Jews.

But towards the close of the second century another note is heard. Dark clouds were beginning to gather over the Roman Empire. Civilization was in danger. All the heritage of Greece and Rome—the treasures of art, literature, and science—all that made life worth living, was threatened by barbarian inroads. Now or never was the time for all good citizens to stand together and save their country.

And the Christians, it seemed, did not care!

This was the complaint of Celsus, an official in the reign of Marcus, whose attack on the Church is partly preserved in the reply of Origen.

“If all were to act as you do, the Emperor would be left solitary and forlorn, and the civilized world would be a prey to savages and barbarians.”

The Christians (though there were some of them in the army) were hated partly as conscientious objectors at a time when their country was in deadly peril. To which the Christians might have

answered that the Government had not taken much trouble to gain their loyalty.

We can partly sympathize with the defenders of the old culture, especially when the Christians repeated the ignorant Semitic abuse of "idolatry." The answers of Porphyry and Maximus of Tyre are dignified, and show a far more spiritual conception of worship than their opponents. But the blame for the persecutions rests almost entirely on the pagans, who failed to recognize that they were attacking an ideal and a practice far higher than their own. And the philosophic Emperor cannot be acquitted. Which would have been more astounded, Justin Martyr or Marcus Aurelius, if he could have seen a Renaissance Pope living in imperial splendour at Rome, calling himself "pontifex maximus," and collecting all the choicest relics of classical art and literature which had escaped the havoc of the Dark Ages?

IV

JULIAN—APOSTATE OR DIEHARD?

I HAVE sometimes asked myself the odd question whether, if I had been an educated Roman under the Empire, I should have become a Christian or not. Prudence would have whispered in my ear, "Don't be a pioneer; it is the early Christian who is got by the lion." But I hope this would not have deterred me if I had been strongly convinced.

If I had lived under Trajan I should probably have known no more about the Christians than Tacitus did, that is, nothing at all. "A most unpopular sect. They most likely deserve it. At any rate, it is no religion for a gentleman."

If I had lived in Italy under Marcus Aurelius, I might with good luck have ended like Marius in Pater's famous novel. After many spiritual wanderings he found himself, when he was dying, in a company of Christians, whose gentle ministrations soothed his last hours. The churches at this time were like little groups of pious Quakers.

In the third century, at Rome or Alexandria, I might have thought that it did not matter much whether I called myself a Christian or a Platonist. Porphyry says of Origen, the great Christian scholar, "His outward life was that of a Christian,

but in his views of things, and of God, he thought like the Greeks."

Augustine could find very little to object to in the Platonists of his time, even in Porphyry, the enemy of Christianity, except that they did not believe in the Incarnation. The Christians often pleaded, "We live among you and live much as you do; we believe much the same as you do; why persecute us?"

In morals the ideal standard was nearly the same, and very different from modern notions. Virginity in both sexes was becoming the cardinal virtue. "The Christians," said Galen, "exercise such self-control that they might be real philosophers." The "real philosopher" was now a pagan monk.

In every age there is an accepted moral standard, to which all religious bodies conform themselves. If we read the missionary magazine of the Mohammedan Church in England (there is one!) we shall find that humanity and toleration and high respect for women are the characteristics of Islam. This has not been exactly the opinion of the Christian subjects of the Turks.

The unlucky Emperor Julian (A.D. 331-363), who has been branded with an ugly nickname, persisted in calling the Christians Galileans, as if they were still a Jewish sect. He was a pagan diehard, who could not see, as the more prudent Constantine had seen, that the game was up, and that as the Christians had transferred most of the honey of

classical culture into their hive, they must be accepted, and on their own terms, except that the emperor was as much Head of the Church as Henry VIII.

We all sympathize with the defenders of lost causes, and some modern unbelievers have made a hero of Julian, who was a good soldier and a good man, but muddle-headed and superstitious. The word "reactionary," a question-begging epithet for anything that we happen not to like, is a red rag to me; but I cannot deny that Julian did try to put the clock back.

There was very little life left in the old religion of Rome, which had never been worth much except as a consecration of patriotism, and now had suffered the fate which Augustine sums up in three impressive words: "in men's hearts it had withered away" (*in cordibus aruerat*).

Besides, it was the religion of the Romans; and there were very few Romans left. Religions have a tough vitality, but they cannot survive their adherents. The other Eastern cults were more satisfying; but Christianity could give all that they gave, and more besides.

Julian, however, had had a good classical education, and he found the Christians, and especially the Bible, barbarous. So a Victorian headmaster is reported to have said that the New Testament is written in such bad Greek that it ought not to be put into the hands of the young.

JULIAN—APOSTATE OR DIEHARD?

I confess that the language used by some of the Christian Fathers about the great writers of antiquity makes me sympathize with Julian. But it was not Christianity that killed classical culture. It died partly of rhetoric, partly of the barbarians, and partly—indirectly—of slavery.

He was lucky to escape the massacre of the family of Constantine, and was probably spared owing to his youth. His cousin Constantius kept him in seclusion in Asia Minor, and then under his eye near Constantinople, from which he went as a student to the University of Athens, where his companions noticed his nervous fidgety manners; he could not stand or sit still.

From his books and lectures he was suddenly snatched by the Emperor, who made him a Caesar and sent him to drive German invaders out of Gaul. As he put on the purple robe, usually fatal to its wearers, he murmured a line from his favourite Homer, "him purple death now seized, and cruel fate."

The soldiers liked him, and when they were ordered by Constantius, contrary to their terms of enlistment, to serve in the East, they mutinied, and, barbarian mercenaries as they were, they hoisted the reluctant Julian on their shields, and proclaimed him Emperor with the German yell (*baritus*). Constantius died on the way to meet him, and the young philosopher, as he thought himself, became sole Emperor.

He did not persecute; "he grudged us the honour of martyrdom," said the Christians, who were hard to satisfy; but he would not let them teach the classics, and worried them in various ways. The great Bishop Athanasius, whom he banished, took it very calmly. "It is but a little cloud and will soon pass."

The mob seized the opportunity to break Christian heads in the streets; but, says the Christian Theodoret, they got as good as they gave.

Paganism, as Augustine says, only wished to die with dignity. It remained strong in the Roman Senate and at Athens, where the famous statue of Athena continued to protect the city till about 480. The schools of philosophy at Athens were suppressed by Justinian as late as 529.

The pagan aristocracy were rather like the old Catholic families in France, who acquiesce in a state of things which they cannot prevent. Jerome draws a charming picture of the old pontiff Albinus, the leader of the pagan party at Rome, sitting in his study with his small granddaughter on his knees, listening to her while she repeated a Christian hymn which her mother had taught her. Symmachus and Bishop Ambrose write to each other on the friendliest terms.

Was paganism really dead? It revived in Italy after the long night of the Dark Ages, and under the form of humanism the renaissance still lives on. It has modified Christianity, and been modified

by it. Both are factors in modern civilization, and they need not be enemies.

The moral of Julian's career seems to be that revivals, except when they try to "revive" something which never existed, are shallow things, which never last long or effect much.

V

THE DEAD PAST

I

“ONE accent of the Holy Ghost the heedless world has never lost.” I should like to know where Emerson obtained this information.

The world has not always been heedless of its greatest prophets. Some of them it has crucified; others it has burnt. Some have been silenced; some have been misunderstood or travestied; some have been forgotten.

If we had to choose between staying as we are and exchanging all that we have preserved from the past for all we have lost, we should probably be wise to stay as we are; but if we chose the other we should be astonished to find what treasures we had recovered.

Some of the greatest teachers have taken no trouble to secure the preservation of their messages. If the prophet is not a man of letters, he must be content to sow the seed in the hearts and minds of his immediate disciples, leaving it to float on the treacherous currents of human memory, or to be expounded by a literary admirer who could probably grasp only one side of his teaching, and that only through the distorting medium of his own mind.

We shall never know whether Plato's Socrates is the real man; Socrates for us is Plato's idea of Socrates. Plato himself, in a letter which is almost certainly genuine, says that he has given to the world the real Socrates, but not the real Plato.

The most vital part of his teaching he did not wish to make public, apparently because he knew that it would be vulgarized and misunderstood.

Samuel Johnson for us is mainly Boswell's idea of Johnson, but we have other sources, including his own literary works.

If we turn to the central figure of all history—I speak as a Christian—it is an uncomfortable reflection that since He left no word of writing, and seemingly never used the art of writing except when He stooped to trace we know not what characters on the unrecording sand, we are dependent for our knowledge of Him on what the early Church thought worth preserving.

These records are partly moral and religious maxims and parables, partly narrative embroidered by miracles and dwelling with great detail on the closing scenes of His life. The Gospels were compiled partly for devout reading, partly for liturgical use, and partly for controversy with Jews and Pagans.

There must be a great deal of priceless value which has been lost for want of a faithful Boswell, and we cannot be quite sure that the early Church never used His name as a peg on which to hang what they considered their best thoughts.

Considering the apparent indifference of Christ to the preservation of His teaching, I think that few utterances are more astonishing than, "Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, there shall this, which this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." A bold prophecy indeed, but a true one.

History, says Goethe's Faust to Wagner, is the invention of historians. The real past is a book sealed with seven seals. The past, as invented or twisted by historians, is a most powerful lever for moving the future.

Napoleon, who described history as "fiction agreed upon" (*une fable convenue*), did his best to gain universal credence for the fable of his own career; the years at Saint Helena were not the least fruitful part of his life.

Sir Robert Walpole, when one of his family asked him what book he would like to be read to him as he lay sick, answered, "Anything you like except history, I know that can't be true."

Bosanquet thought that the amount of philosophical truth which can be gathered from recorded history is very small.

He is nearer the mark, in my opinion, than philosophers like the Italian Croce, who argue that reality is through and through historical. I think, however, that history as a biography of ideas or ideals has more value than history as a record of facts, for most historical facts are either doubtful

or unimportant. "Nothing worthy proving can be proven, Nor yet disproven."

What are the chief agencies by which the legacy of the past has been so largely destroyed?

War has done a great deal of damage, though not so much as might be supposed. The Romans in one year wiped out two of the finest cities in the world at that time—Carthage and Corinth. There is a pathetic little poem describing a visit to the ruins of Corinth, with the sea-birds waiting over the deserted isthmus, without a human being in sight.

Hulagu the Tartar (a good name, this) obliterated the gay civilization of the Arabian Nights at Bagdad. It was the pleasing habit of these nomads to leave pyramids of human skulls to mark the sites of the cities which they captured.

But all through the turbulent Middle Ages the glorious churches and town halls of Western Europe remained intact; it was left for our own contemporaries to wreck Rheims and Ypres, and burn the library at Louvain, as the great library at Alexandria was burnt (accidentally, however) during a siege by the Romans.

Fanaticism has probably more crimes to answer for than war. When Xerxes burnt Greek temples Herodotus could see no motive for such conduct except wanton impiety. The Persians, to do them justice, were usually tolerant. But the early Christians borrowed from the Jews the Semitic hatred of

“idolatry.” Nearly the whole of the famous Greek statuary, the highest achievement in its kind of human genius, perished. The statues in our museums are nearly all trade-copies, good enough for Roman millionaires, who knew no more about art than a Chicago pork-merchant. I think we must all sympathize with the dignified protest of Maximus of Tyre against this vandalism. “The Greek custom was to represent the gods by the most beautiful things on earth—pure material, the human form, perfect art. The idea of those who made divine images in human form is quite reasonable, since the spirit of man is the nearest of all things to God.”

THE DEAD PAST

II

It is very stupid not to distinguish the Dark Ages from the Middle Ages. It is perverse not to recognize that there was a real setback in human progress, lasting several centuries, during which a very large part of the legacy of antiquity was irretrievably lost.

I spoke in the preceding essay of the destruction of ancient art. The Parthenon was only saved by being turned into a church. It was finally blown up by a German gunner in the service of Venice in 1687.

The literary losses are naturally incalculable, since we cannot judge of the value of what has perished. But we know that some of the greatest of ancient works, such as parts of Aristotle and of the Annals of Tacitus, survived only by lucky accidents. Menander's comedies vanished unaccountably at the time of the Renaissance.

The exquisite Odes of Sappho seem to have been burnt deliberately at Rome and Constantinople for the same reason that made "Jix" ban *The Well of Loneliness*. Sappho was probably homosexual, though a recent biographer depicts her as a worthy school-

mistress, who wrote complimentary letters in verse to her pupils.

But these lovely odes (we have just a few of them) could not have done anybody much harm; and it was a very odd prudishness which destroyed them and preserved Petronius and Apuleius, who in parts represent that class of literature which is seized by the police; and for the matter of that, the Christian Boccaccio is just as bad as any of them.

For a former college don to praise the Greeks is not mere prejudice. "Except the blind forces of nature," says Sir Henry Sumner Maine, "nothing moves in this world which is not Greek in its origin." Goethe says, "In art and literature, in all that belongs to the realm of thought and reason, we are her heirs and continuers for ever; she set up for humanity its final framework."

"There was once a little corner of the earth," says the French painter Ingres, "where letters and arts spread over the things of nature like a second light, for all peoples and generations to come."

"Beside the great Attic poets like Aeschylus and Sophocles," says Goethe again, "I am absolutely nothing."

"I have gone back to Greek literature," says Macaulay, "with a passion quite astonishing to myself. I feel as if I had never known before what intellectual enjoyment was."

Nor is it possible to say that we have been to school with the Greeks long enough. The real

Greece acted on modern Europe very late. Until the Renaissance, Greek literature was almost unknown in the West, which knew the Greek temple only from Vitruvius and Greek sculpture from Roman copies.

Not till the arrival of the Aegina marbles at Munich in 1812 and the Elgin marbles at London in 1816 was Greek art revealed, and we are still learning.

And what have we left of this incomparable heritage? The earliest school of philosophy has perished almost entirely. Of Aeschylus and Sophocles, both copious playwrights, we have seven plays by each. Aristotle was nearly lost; we have his lecture-notes, not his finished literary works. Of the famous lyric poets we have only fragments.

Hardly anything remains of the Stoics and Epicureans. Greek science perished almost entirely, though one text-book, Eucleides on geometry, had a reign of two thousand years in our schools, and a little medical treatise attributed to Hippocrates was quite lately in use in Scotland and the United States. The "oath of Hippocrates" is still the code of honour in the medical profession.

What we have lost in natural science may be guessed by one sentence in Plutarch. "Cleanthes thought that the Greeks ought to have prosecuted Aristarchus for impiety, for altering the centre of the universe. For he tried to account for the phenomena by the hypothesis that the sun and stars are

motionless, and that the earth revolves round the sun in an oblique circle, at the same time rotating on its own axis." This precursor of Galileo was in some danger of sharing his fate!

In Latin we have lost the first great Roman poet, Ennius, and part of the histories of Livy and Tacitus. We narrowly escaped a heavier loss, for Virgil wished to destroy his *Æneid*, when he found that he must die without giving the final touches. So St. Thomas Aquinas, who died before he was fifty, said on his death-bed, "All my work (the marvellous "Summa" of theology, which in the Roman Church almost ranks with the Bible) is just straw!"

And what did our ancestors think worth preserving, while they allowed so much that would have been more precious than rubies to perish? There is not much in secular Greek which is not worth reading, though I have not ploughed through the long gossiping causeries of Athenaeus, or the novelists of Byzantium. But in Latin we have masses of very inferior poetry, dating from the Silver Age, and some very poor prose, too.

Do any of my readers own the Fathers of the Church, in folios weighing about two tons? It is amazing how these eminent ecclesiastics, who were active administrators, managed to spoil so much good paper.

Their works are partly controversial theology, partly Biblical commentary, and partly sermons—

neither better nor worse than the collected sermons of the Reverend Canon A, or the Right Reverend Bishop B, which poured forth from the press all through the last century, and were bought and read in thousands of English homes.

Those ponderous tomes, after encumbering the vaults of booksellers' shops for a long time, were brought out at the time of the Oxford movement, and every good Anglo-Catholic had to buy them. I inherited enough of them to sink a fair-sized steamboat, but I managed to plant them on my brother.

Since the discovery of printing it is probable that few good books have perished entirely, in the sense that no copy of them survives. But very many have died in the sense that nobody ever reads them. A few come to life again after being almost forgotten, like the novels of Miss Yonge and Anthony Trollope.

I sometimes console myself by the old theory of cycles—that every phase of civilization will repeat itself. Aristotle thought that all the arts are discovered and lost and rediscovered countless times. I do not really believe this. There have been a few supremely important flowering times of genius, and if we lose what they have bequeathed to us we may be the poorer for ever. Such were the flowering-times which produced Greek art, philosophy, science and literature, the Christian revelation, and Italian painting.

After two or three hours in the Italian exhibition

in London a few years ago I felt that here is something which will never be equalled again.

Modern science should no doubt be added, though I should like to be more sure that we shall not at last use it to our own destruction.

The time must come, they tell us, when all human achievements will be blotted out like children's sand castles at the next high tide. When the last man has left his bones on some desolate shore, there will be no memory anywhere that our race has existed. All the past will be dead.

And yet I do not believe it. There is an eternal order in which all the higher values—including human spirits—are preserved safe.

"Nothing that really *is* can ever perish," said my favourite philosopher, Plotinus, in the third century. It is a reasonable faith, if there is a God.

EDUCATION

I

A LIBERAL EDUCATION

EDUCATION is one of the numerous subjects discussed at the meetings of the British Association. When the Association met at Blackpool two years ago, there was an important address on this subject by Sir Richard Livingstone, the President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Education interests, or ought to interest, everybody; and the changes in our social habits are creating new problems.

Putting it very shortly, it ought now to be possible, and if possible it is certainly desirable, to place what used to be called a Liberal Education within reach of all who are able to profit by it. It is desirable because those who have had the privilege of such an education know that it opens the door to all the choicest of earthly enjoyments—the knowledge of the best that has been thought, said, and done in the world; and because in the future the common man will have enough leisure to enter into this spiritual kingdom, if he can be induced to care for such things.

I will leave Sir Richard's lecture for another article, and to-day I will try to answer the question what a Liberal Education means.

Of course it has nothing to do with politics. It was Steele who said of Lady Elizabeth Hastings

that "to love her is a Liberal Education," a remark which was applied by a love-sick swain in the Victorian age to the lady who had won his affection. "That is all very well," said his friend, "but her father is one of the head Johnnies in the Primrose League."

It has nothing to do with politics; a Liberal Education is the education of a free man, a gentleman, or a gentlewoman, who needs to be taught how to employ his or her leisure rightly. This is Aristotle's definition of the object of education; our word "school" comes from the Greek word for leisure.

It used to be assumed that the poor have no leisure, and therefore need no education; in modern England they have a good deal of leisure, but are they being educated to enjoy it wisely? That is the subject of Sir Richard's address.

The object of education may be considered with reference either to the students or their studies. Higher education in England has considered the students almost exclusively; in the German universities the studies were more important. Every year a vast number of learned monographs were turned out; the object of education seemed to be to know more and more about less and less.

Our theory is more Liberal, because it aims at training character rather than intellect; but the upper class, whom Matthew Arnold called barbarians, had an ideal rather like that of the ancient Persians, who were taught to ride, to shoot, and to

speak the truth. This did not satisfy the Greeks, and it should not satisfy us.

When Liberal Education is no longer the training of a privileged class to fit young men for positions of authority—an object which our public schools on the whole fulfilled very well—but an ideal for everybody, it has to contend against several obstacles.

The British parent wants to know what is the *use* of the education which his son is getting, by which he often means what sort of income are you training him to earn when he grows up? Technical education is thus an enemy of humanism. Boys begin to specialize much too soon, if the object of education is to train the mind and character.

Another insidious enemy is the ambition of the teachers, who are almost bound to teach with a view to examinations. The memory of the pupils is loaded, at the time when it is most retentive, with barren facts, gobbets of crude information, to be presently disgorged in the same state for the benefit of the examiners. The ambition of the pupil, of course, leads him in the same direction.

The tyranny of examinations has also a bad effect on the choice of subjects; for some of the most stimulating subjects, such as our own literature, are almost impossible to examine upon, unless we treat Shakespeare (for example) as a foreign language, and ask boys to explain “kerns and gallow-glasses,” “making the green one red,” and so on.

But the greatest enemy of Liberal Education is the ingrained contempt for the intellectual life in England. An Englishman, says Bishop Creighton, not only has no ideas; he hates an idea when he meets one. Kingsley's advice, "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever," has been too often offered to Britannia as an appropriate motto.

We think that pluck and luck will always carry an Englishman through. We repeated that Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of our public schools, until it became too plain that some more recent battles were lost in the same places. Our countrymen seldom understand the happiness of mental cultivation in and for itself.

The object of Liberal Education is rational enjoyment—the kind of enjoyment which only an educated man can feel; and this is a good. It is worth having for its own sake, and needs no further justification.

Nevertheless, the pleasure is a kind of by-product. If a man pursues mental cultivation for the sake of the refined pleasure which he expects from it, he will fail. This is what ruined the aesthetic movement in the last century. No one flounders in education quite so badly as the voluptuary, who degrades culture in the service of luxurious feeling, and often proves the truth of the Latin proverb, "Unless a vessel is clean, whatever you pour into it turns sour."

Our intellectual studies must be disinterested, in

the sense that we follow them for their own sake, and not for any ulterior motive. One of the finest praises of true education is in the seventh chapter of the Wisdom of Solomon. The "wisdom" which in this passage is to be courted for her own sake is what we mean by Liberal Education.

We are sometimes told that the ideal is to know something of everything, and everything of something. But this is soaring too high. I prefer to say that the ideal of education is that we should learn all that it concerns us to know, in order that thereby we may become all that it concerns us to be. That means that the aim of education is the knowledge not of facts but of values, which are facts apprehended in relation to each other and to ourselves.

The wise man is he who knows the relative values of things; the uncultivated man is he who, though he may know the price of everything, knows the value of nothing. In consequence, in the words of the Old Testament, he gives his money for that which is not bread, and his labour for that which satisfieth not.

No one is so unpractical as the so-called practical man, who wastes his energies either in irrational accumulation of the instruments of pleasure, which he has neither the leisure nor the taste to enjoy, or on fashionable amusements which soon pall upon him, or on those disproportioned and undisciplined enthusiasms which we call fads, and which plague those societies, like our own and that

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of America, which have never troubled to get their values right.

How can we help to make our popular education more in accordance with these ideals? I will consider this next week. But we really must not expect too much. Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to the Temple of the Muses as well as to eternal life, and few there be that find it.

We must be content to remove hindrances from those who are called to the quest, and to help the others as far as their capacities allow them to go.

II

IMPROVING OUR MINDS

THE intelligent man, says Plato, will prize those studies which result in his soul getting soberness, righteousness, and wisdom, and will less value the others. "Wisdom" is what we pray for on Whit-Sunday; "grant us to have a right judgment in all things." Happiness, as I said in writing of "A Liberal Education," comes unsought whenever we are on the right road.

We do not always remember the vast changes which have been made in the last hundred years.

A hundred years ago, the average school life for the children of the poor was eighteen months or two years. At Liverpool, less than half the children under fifteen went to school; and if the conditions were like those at Salford, where less than half the school-children were taught to read and write, those who escaped education at Liverpool did not miss much. At Hull, about one-third of the men and two-thirds of the women could not sign the marriage registers.

At Manchester in 1810 the signers were 52 per cent, the markers 48 per cent; twenty-eight years later the proportion was 55 to 45, a very slight improvement. A nation where half the population is illiterate can hardly be called civilized. Whatever

criticisms may be made on our present system, there has been an immense improvement.

Just now we are all talking about physical training as a necessary part of education. Last year a German educationist came to see Eton, and was asked what he thought of it. "What strikes me most," he replied, "is the deplorable physique of the boys."

When this was repeated to me, I was very much annoyed. If he had said that he found a deplorable want of intellectual interest in the boys—well, I have tried to teach Eton boys myself, and I did not observe in them that hunger and thirst for knowledge which Cicero regarded as part of human nature. "The love of knowledge pertains most of all to human nature, for we are all drawn to the pursuit of knowledge, in which to excel we consider admirable, whereas to mistake, to err, to be ignorant, is both an evil and a disgrace. As soon as we escape from the pressure of necessary cares, we desire to see, to hear, to learn; we consider the knowledge of what is hidden or wonderful a condition of our happiness."

This is not quite my recollection of the average Etonian. But confound this German! Is there any place in the world where you will find finer human animals than at our public schools and universities?

But I fear I was wrong. One or two friends who have lately been in Germany have been astonished at the splendid physique of the young Germans.

They are much better trained physically than our young people; they hold themselves better, and, in fact, are finer specimens of humanity than we can show. If this is true even of our public schools, it is much more true of the population generally. There is evidently much to be done in this direction.

I now come to the suggestions of Sir Richard Livingstone, whose address to the British Association I mentioned last week. Every individual, he says, has a threefold function in the world—to make a livelihood, to be a citizen, and to be a man.

He adds that it is the duty of the State to see that everyone has the opportunity of performing these three functions. (Why always “the State”? Is that repellent institution to be the universal dry-nurse, excusing us from doing anything for ourselves or each other?) But he is right when he says that a body undeveloped, a character weak or debased, a mind unaware of the universe which we inhabit or of the achievements and ideals of mankind, proclaim the failure of education.

If we leave the great mass of our people uneducated, “the bad film and the betting news will be its relaxation; the bad press its literature; passion, prejudice, the catchword, and the slogan will be its masters.”

One suggested remedy is to keep all children at school at least two years longer. I cannot agree. The expense would be terrific, and there really are limits to the burdens which can be laid on the

unhappy taxpayer. Already the burden of educating his neighbour's children is one of the handicaps which make him resolve to have no children of his own. Besides, many boys of fifteen and sixteen are more usefully employed in industry.

It is quite untrue that the low intellectual level of the population is mainly due to want of opportunity. Why should we suppose that the children of the working man are much more virtuous and intelligent and keen to improve their minds than those who attend expensive schools?

Sir Richard wishes, as an alternative to keeping all boys at school for two or three years longer, to establish a compulsory part-time continuation system which will carry them on to eighteen.

Why compulsory? One man may lead a horse to the water, but twenty cannot make him drink. Compulsory education is unwilling education; the majority of boys do not want it. The minority do, and it is for them that provision should be made.

In Denmark, Sir Richard says, 30 per cent of the working class population attend *voluntarily*, and in part at their own expense, adult schools, where the course lasts for some five months, and the education is humanistic in the sense that it is neither technical nor utilitarian. That is very encouraging, and very creditable to the Danes. At home we have that excellent institution the Workers' Educational Association, which in 1935 enrolled 59,000 students. This degree of success "shows what a clear aim,

pursued with faith and wisdom, can create." But 59,000 is very far short of 30 per cent of the working class population; they could all form part of a Cup-tie Final crowd. The fact is, I am afraid, that the Danes care more about the things of the mind than we do; I do not think compulsion is the remedy.

It is a very bad sign that such a large proportion of those who wish to continue their education choose to study economics and nothing else. And such economics! The sole result of the books they read and the lectures they attend is to fill their minds with hatred and bitterness. They hypnotize themselves with catchwords like *proletarian*, *bourgeois*, *wage-slaves*, *capitalism*, which have no relation to actual conditions in this country or any other, and they become much more illiberal than if they had remained illiterate like their great-grandfathers. We cannot blame them much; it is the materialism of the nineteenth-century employers coming home to roost. But this is certainly not Liberal Education.

What we need is that which in religion is called conversion. We want the young generation to value and "think on whatsoever things are true, honest, noble, pure, and of good report." We want them to study good literature and history, for, as Sir Richard says, these studies are a perpetual rebuke to the feeble vision and failing faith from which all men suffer, and to the self-contented spiritual mediocrity which is a special danger of democracy.

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But I repeat that we ought not to expect too much from a nation which is sound at heart, but less appreciative of the finer flavours of life than the French, who have a longer tradition of respect for the things of the mind, and a greater skill in the art of living.

SCIENCE

I

POPULARIZED SCIENCE

WE are so apt to complain of the vulgarity of our age that it is worth while to remember how many excellent books embodying the latest results of science are published at prices which show that a large sale is expected.

I have on my shelves, besides the books on astronomy by Eddington and Jeans, which are best-sellers, J. A. Thomson's *Biology*, H. G. Wells's *Outline of Modern Knowledge*, and now F. Sherwood Taylor's *The World of Science*—over a thousand pages for eight and sixpence.

There must be a great deal of disinterested love of knowledge for its own sake. For nothing can be further removed from what an orator called the petty provincialisms of this paltry planet than astronomy and physics. Not even a Socialist agitator could find inspiration in the four hundred million miles of attenuated gas which make up the diameter of Betelgeuse. There is no sex appeal in the pirouetting of Sirius with his diminutive but too too solid companion. If the universe disappears in radiation, neither we nor any of our descendants will witness the catastrophe.

Why are these abstruse subjects so attractive to those who, like myself, never possessed "the low

cunning necessary for success in mathematics," as an Oxford don of the old school put it?

Well, the prestige of science, as the one progressive study, is immense. Where else, men say, shall we find a religion in which we can believe without evasion and self-deception, a faith without superstition? "True religion," said Tolstoy, "is a relation in accordance with reason and contemporary knowledge, which a man establishes with the infinite life around him; it is such as binds him to that infinity and guides his conduct." In accordance with contemporary knowledge, we cannot be content with beliefs which rest on exploded science.

But science has learned a new humility when it approaches ultimate problems. No longer does agnosticism offer us "clear views and certain." No longer, like Herbert Spencer, does it call God the Unknowable, and then tell us so much about Him that he almost repeats Aquinas and the Athanasian Creed. Science and religion, after a big quarrel in the last century, went each on its own way; but they have met at the cross-roads.

This last phrase is from Alfred Noyes's book, *The Unknown God*, which I strongly recommend as one of the ablest defences of Christianity that I know. It is all the better that it is written by a layman, not a priest, and by a poet, not a philosopher. Neither his philosophy nor his science is quite impeccable; but his intense conviction is most impressive, and his reasons are sound. A poet is the

right man to deal with these questions, for the natural language of devotion is poetry, and all the philosophers who are really alive have been poets.

He takes a mischievous pleasure in proving out of their own mouths that Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, and Haeckel were entirely convinced that there is a divine purpose in the creation, and also that new discoveries in science had to fight hard against the ingrained and dogmatic conservatism of the professors. It is not generally known that when Bishop Wilberforce on a celebrated occasion measured swords with Huxley and got the worst of it, he had been primed by Owen, who had a great reputation and was quite unconvinced by Darwin.

But the most interesting part of the book is where Mr. Noyes is on his own ground as a lover of the beauties of nature. I can see no flaw in this argument. The Christian philosopher maintains that the nature of God is revealed as Goodness, Truth, and Beauty, these being absolute values, and not a means to anything else. This is plainest in the case of Beauty, which does not seem to subserve any end outside itself.

Take the exquisite pattern on a butterfly's wing—a marvel of order, arrangement, unity in variety, proportion, and harmony. For whom is this lovely design painted? Darwin has a plain answer—to please Miss Butterfly. But, says Mr. Noyes, "Can we suppose that Jane, the Painted Lady, preferred the fluttering Robert to the fluttering William because

Robert had a minute moon with a slightly more delicately shaded halo on its wings?" The notion is really absurd.

And yet Darwin says, "To believe that many structures have been created for the sake of beauty, to delight man or the Creator—but this latter point is beyond the scope of scientific discussion—would be absolutely fatal to my theory." It is difficult to see why it would be fatal to his theory, and I am convinced that it is true—not, of course, to delight man, but to delight the Creator.

That man is capable of thinking God's thoughts after Him, of loving "because He first loved us," and of admiring the creation which He "saw, and behold it was very good," are facts of immense importance; they show that all true religion is both natural and revealed.

Mr. Noyes makes another point with which I entirely agree. Some of our men of science try to escape from certain awkward dilemmas by asserting that their electrons and protons are only mathematical formulas. This really won't do. "No one who has watched the bombardment of the atom in a laboratory could describe the experiment as merely algebraical; nothing could be more actual and practical." We cannot allow the professors to escape into a world of empty abstractions. That would be fatal for science and very bad for religion.

There is one sentence in Dr. Sherwood Taylor's book (p. 769) which I read with great satisfaction.

The theory that the universe is running down like a clock to ultimate annihilation is enunciated with complete conviction by Jeans and Eddington; the latter says there is no hope for us as scientists if we refuse to believe it.

I wrote a book to discuss what the results of this theory are for religion and philosophy. It does not touch orthodox Christianity at all, but it is very awkward for Platonism. Plato held that Time is the moving image of Eternity; the universe is perpetual, as its Creator is eternal. A one-way process must have a beginning as well as an end in Time. Can any reason be shown why it did not begin sooner?

If the clock is running down, it must have been wound up at a date which we could name if we knew it. And whatever Power wound it up once, may presumably wind it up again. These objections seemed to me to justify some hesitation in accepting the theory of an irrevocable dissipation of energy.

And now Dr. Sherwood Taylor writes: "A proton and an electron, by amalgamating, would probably produce a neutron with almost the same mass, so that no great amount of energy would be liberated. At present, opinion is inclined to favour the view that the building up of hydrogen is a more probable source of energy than the mutual annihilation of protons and electrons." If so, the destructive and recuperative forces may balance each other.

I hope this theory will win. But, as Emerson said, there is a crack in all that God has made. Every philosophy has its vulnerable "heel of Achilles."

II

DON'T BLAME THE SCIENTIST

I HAVE just been reading some of the best addresses delivered last year [1936] to the British Association. They have been reprinted by Messrs. Allen and Unwin. They are a defence of Science, for even Science has its enemies.

There is a queer sentence, not meant to be a prophecy, at the beginning of Aristotle's *Politics*. "If every instrument could accomplish its own work, obeying or anticipating human will—if the shuttle could weave and the bow strike the lyre without a hand to guide them, skilled workers would not need servants, nor masters slaves."

This is exactly what Applied Science, so much neglected by the Greeks and Romans, has done for us. Where human labour is very cheap, machines are not discovered. The workman, whom Aristotle impolitely calls "a live tool," is now so expensive that thousands of brains are at work trying to make him unnecessary. In the future, the manual labourers will not be very numerous, a fact which may have important political consequences.

I can remember when Science was the Cinderella of education. Gladstone once asked Faraday whether electricity was "any use." When I was a boy at Eton, I heard Ruskin give a lecture entirely devoted

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to pouring ridicule upon Natural Science. "Stinks," said a school friend of mine, "is a euphemism for Natural Science."

On the other side there were Philistines like Matthew Arnold's "Mr. Bottles," who said, "Fizz, fizz! Bang, bang! That's what I call education."

The air that blows round Science is like mountain air, thin but bracing and healthy. No list of modern heroes would be complete without the names of medical researchers who have risked and in some cases given their lives to relieve human suffering. If we want to find pure and disinterested love of truth, it is among scientific workers that we shall discover it.

Kepler's words in 1618 are famous. "Let my book be read now or by posterity, I care not which. It may well wait a century for a reader, as God has waited six thousand years for an observer."

Science has had its numerous confessors and martyrs. Cleanthes the Stoic wanted to prosecute Aristarchus for impiety, for anticipating Galileo's discovery. Galileo languished in prison; Giordano Bruno was burnt alive; Lavoisier was guillotined, because "*La République n'a pas besoin des savants.*"

In the nineteenth century men had to be content with verbal missiles. I remember Dean Burgon's peroration in the Oxford University pulpit: "Leave me my ancestors in Paradise, and I leave you yours in the Zoological Gardens."

In the republic of scholarship and science there

are, or ought to be, no frontiers. Soon after the war there was a Congress of Physiology at Edinburgh, and a foreign nation wished to exclude the Germans, a proposal which was duly quashed by our men. Who would have thought that the Germans would have banished and seized the property of many of their most distinguished scientific researchers, avowedly on the ground that they have Jewish blood in their veins? An indelible disgrace to a great nation.

With this exception, Science is really international, and it is an understood thing that no important medical discovery shall be kept secret.

The triumphs of bacteriology read like a romance. All this wonderful work, which has abolished plague and nearly abolished typhus in Europe, which has cleared Havana, Panama, the West Indies, and Rio of yellow fever, and made the Roman Campagna habitable, is the development of Pasteur's researches on putrefaction, Lister's application of them in treating wounds, and the discovery of microbes by numerous investigators from many nations. And yet we still honour our destroyers more than our preservers!

The good gifts of Science are innumerable and invaluable. But is there not another side to her generosity? Has she not endowed us with knowledge which is a danger and a curse? This is the charge which more than one of these essayists try to meet.

There is something very horrible in the thought

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of scientific men, kindly, no doubt, and benevolent in private life, sitting down to devise some more powerful explosive, some more deadly poisonous gas, to destroy his fellow creatures, not soldiers only, but non-combatants, women, and children.

The chemists hate this prostitution of their knowledge for destructive ends. So one of them here assures us, no doubt truly; but ought they not to refuse to do it, just as there are operations which a surgeon refuses to perform, and criminal acts to which no physician or dispensing chemist would stoop?

This is regarded as a difficult point of ethics; but there is on record a statement by a famous scientist that he had discovered a poison which could not be detected, and that he had resolved that the knowledge should die with him.

The plain fact is that, as the late Sir Alfred Ewing said, "the command of nature has been put into man's hands before he knows how to command himself."

The Warden of New College, Dr. H. A. L. Fisher, in his great history of Europe, gives us this warning: "The developing miracle of science is at our disposal to use or to abuse, to make or to mar. With science we may lay civilization in ruins or enter into a period of plenty and well-being the like of which has never been experienced by mankind."

The latest gases have not yet been tried except against the unfortunate Abyssinians—a most das-

tardly trick—and the war in Spain suggests that the destructiveness of air raids is not quite so great as had been supposed; but who can tell what new inventions may be made? The only safeguard against attempts to destroy some great European capital seems to be the fear of reprisals.

This, however, can hardly be an indictment against Science. We cannot blame the inventor of safety matches if a naughty boy uses one to set fire to a haystack.

The remedy is to recall civilized mankind to some degree of sanity and decency, some sense of brotherhood as the sharers in a common culture and religion; and this is plainly the business not of scientific men as such, but of the Churches and of those who have the ear of the public as moral and spiritual guides. The importance of this duty cannot be exaggerated.

One other indictment is considered in this book. The greatest danger for civilization is the increased power that Science has given to Governments. When they have once got control of the machinery they can suppress any exercise of the popular will.

Not only can any mob be dispersed at once by air bombs, but the Press can be muzzled, the frontiers closed to news from outside, wireless and popular advertisement and education itself can be turned into instruments of propaganda to force the people into a mould. This means that there is a prospect, already almost realized in some countries,

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of the most searching and soul-destroying tyranny that the world has ever known.

This cannot be denied. The technique of tyranny has been perfected as completely as the technique of revolution, and it is not a pleasant look-out.

But it is useless to blame Science. If we value our liberty we must be ready to defend it even at the cost of our own lives. Tyranny needs an army of sycophants, base tools, and spies. Could they be found in this country?

III

RECIPES FOR GENIUS

I HAVE been reading again Havelock Ellis's *Study of British Genius*.

There is no modern writer from whom I have learnt more. But the word genius has been made too cheap. The subject of half the obituary notices in the newspapers is said to have had a genius for friendship, which only means that he was generally popular.

I do not know the meaning of genius as opposed to talent; I am only sure that genius is *not* "an infinite capacity for taking pains." The industrious apprentice ends as a successful man, not a genius.

Was Dryden (following Aristotle and Seneca) right in saying, "Great wits are sure to madness near allied"?

Lombroso and other alienists have thought so; Ellis agrees that genius is an abnormality, or at least a one-sided development, but thinks that the greatest men have usually been perfectly sane. My old friend Sir Francis Galton went further, and said that the ablest men whom he had known were usually very fine specimens of humanity, physically and mentally.

At the same time, a woman who wants a quiet

life had better not marry a genius. It has been said with some exaggeration that literary biography is rather like the Newgate Calendar.

However, Ellis's book does not really deal with genius, but with more ordinary ability, the sort of distinction which gets a man into the Dictionary of National Biography.

He tries to answer a great many questions about the most favourable conditions for the production of talent. Some of his conclusions are very interesting, others (in my opinion) of doubtful value.

Among the various ingredients in our population, which are the best endowed with brains?

"The unmixed Saxon," who lives in Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and (I regret to say) Berkshire, "is marked by mental mediocrity." The Angles, Jutes (in Kent), and Danes are better.

Norfolk and Suffolk come out best among the counties, followed by the delightful district which includes Somerset, Devon, Gloucester and Wilts.

The Danish districts are responsible for most of our mathematicians, and Ellis thinks that the fame of Cambridge University in mathematics is due to the fact that East Anglians generally go there, rather than to Oxford. I doubt whether this is any longer true.

The author finds that Oxford produces more distinguished men than Cambridge. Out of 975 eminent men, 232 were at Oxford, 191 at Cambridge; 76 came from Scotch universities. In religion, said

Macaulay, Cambridge produces reformers, Oxford burns them. But Oxford gets the bishoprics.

I think it would be true to say that at present most of our popular men of letters have had no university education.

Cambridge, however, has an undisputed pre-eminence in poets. Oxford can only boast of Shelley, whom she promptly expelled. I cannot account for this; the scenery of Cambridgeshire never made me feel poetical.

Nor was Cambridge at all kind to her poets. She nearly turned Coleridge into a heavy dragoon, and tricked Gray into sliding down his private fire-escape into a water-butt placed to receive him.

Among the callings of the fathers of great men, the clergy come out easily first. "The proportion of distinguished men and women contributed by the families of the clergy can only be described as enormous." "There are many more butchers and bakers than clergy, but only two butchers and four bakers have produced eminent children, as against 139 parsons."

Galton told me the same thing. I have no explanation to offer, except that the clergy and their families usually live simple, regular, and healthy lives. But whatever the explanation, the fact is a strong argument against encouraging clerical celibacy, as some wish to do.

However, we parsons must not be too much lifted up by this pre-eminence. "The clerical pro-

fession also produces more idiots than any other class." Shame! I cannot believe it.

The country seems to be more favourable than the town to the production of ability, and London has been ignored for a very curious reason. If a Londoner is one whose parents and grandparents were born in London, there are no Londoners, or it is very difficult to find them.

"A great metropolis (says Havelock Ellis) swiftly kills those whom it attracts." This may have been so in the Middle Ages and the early modern period; but London is now a very healthy town.

It was hardly worth arguing that the great man is usually precocious. Before we are twenty most of us are really made or unmade for life. In all the arts and crafts, as in most games like cricket and golf, it is impossible to begin too early. The St. Andrews professionals learnt their coveted swing as soon as they could handle a club.

The same is true of men of letters. They were almost always gluttons for reading, and most of them began to write early in their teens.

The great man is slightly, but not much, more prone to celibacy than the small man. Kipling's couplet, "Down to Gehenna or up to the Throne, He travels the fastest who travels alone," has a modicum of truth.

I have sometimes thought that the good bachelor and the good married woman are the best of their respective sexes. But this is a very rash generalization.

OUR PRESENT DISCONTENTS

The most charming love-poets have often shown no fervour in real love-making. Sir Philip Sidney's sonnets did not prevail with his Stella, who eloped with another man who was not a poet.

I am entirely sceptical about the mythical sorrows of Shakespeare. If a man is desperately unhappy he does not sit down and write poetry. As Seneca says, "*Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.*"

The following quotation from Sir Spencer Wells may gratify some of my readers. "I never met with a real case of gout in a person not remarkable for mental activity, unless the tendency was inherited." If the fathers have eaten too many *sweet* grapes, the children's teeth are set on edge; otherwise your painful toe may be a sign of genius. However, gout is no longer very common, if we may believe an American medical newspaper which I saw in the United States. "Uric acid is tottering upon its throne; the triumphs of democracy are no longer confined to politics."

Nothing in Havelock Ellis's book surprised me more than to learn that political agitators have light hair and blue eyes. My idea of a firebrand is Mr. Maxton, or the saturnine Lenin. In my experience the "mentally mediocre" and blond Saxon is usually a Conservative.

Is it true that all first-rate rifle shots have blue or grey eyes? This is not from Ellis, but I have heard it positively asserted.

And is it true that all albinos are intellectually

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much above the average? I once examined an albino who smudged his papers with his nose ; but we gave him his first class without hesitation. And two or three other albinos whom I have known have had very good brains.

MISCELLANEOUS

I

THE ANATOMY OF BOREDOM

SCHOPENHAUER, the philosopher of pessimism, says that human life swings backwards and forwards between discontent and boredom. We want something which we have not got; that is a painful condition; as soon as we have got it, we find that it brings us no satisfaction.

It is true that restlessness is part of human nature. Most of our troubles, someone has said, come from not being able to sit still in a room. But has not all progress come from the same source?

There are some who are content to sit still in a room—contemplative philosophers, very old men and women, lazy and somnolent people. But they do not do the work of the world. Most of us are restless; we want to make something, to do something, and to become something which we are not already. When we are stopped, we are impatient, irritated and unhappy; we are bored, in fact.

Ambitious people are usually very easily bored; they grudge any time which from their point of view is wasted. "It is impossible to amuse Napoleon," said one of his courtiers; "he is absolutely unamusable."

This type of man may be preparing for himself a dreary old age, for all his life he has taken no interest

in anything which does not help or thwart him in his career. He divides the whole outer world into stepping-stones and stumbling-blocks.

Civilized man has devised regular work as a remedy against boredom. The merit of it is that it forms habits, and when we are working mechanically we are not conscious of boredom. The scholar, like Browning's "Grammarians," may devote his life to Greek particles, which no doubt may be interesting, as almost everything is if you go into it deeply enough; but he is so used to his study desk and his books that he would be bored at once if he were snatched away from them.

Work is the only occupation which we can tolerate except in small doses, and it keeps us out of mischief. "A man is seldom so harmlessly occupied," said Dr. Johnson, "as when he is making money."

A great deal of twaddle is talked about the pleasure of work. "I have found," said the great German scholar Harnack, perhaps the most learned man in Europe, "that the people who talk loudest about the pleasure of work are not very laborious themselves. Three-fourths of work is only stupefying toil."

But this is going much too far. No one ought to be obliged to practise "stupefying toil"; the great scholar's life is one of voluntary sacrifice; he is not unhappy, but he is glad when the day's work is done. He is tired, not bored.

To say that work is a necessary evil is very mischievous. I was sorry to read in Bertrand Russell, who never worked in this spirit himself, "It is very rare that a man has any spontaneous impulse to the work which he has to do. He works for the sake of the pay. The best we can hope for is to diminish the amount. Four hours' boredom is a thing which most people could endure without damage."

This is a deadly doctrine. Of course those who work in a grudging spirit, with their eyes on the clock, are bored, whether they have to work four hours or eight. We might as well go back to slavery at once.

It is generally admitted that the leisured class are bored and discontented, unless they can make for themselves some real work, requiring severe discipline, and perhaps a spice of danger. If not, their business is to get pleasure, and pleasure, as moralists are never tired of telling us, cannot be aimed at directly with success.

The attempts which they make are varied and curious. Of some men it may be said that not only is their only pursuit pleasure, but their only pleasure is pursuit. The chief occupations of the primitive savage, hunting, fighting, eating, dancing, and the adornment of the person, are the chosen employments of the spoilt children of civilization.

The wise man avoids boredom by treating his work as a great game; but many kinds of work can hardly be so treated.

There is a famous sentence of Spinoza, which goes to the root of the matter. "Happiness or unhappiness depends on the quality of the object which we love. Love towards a thing eternal and infinite feeds the mind wholly with joy, and is unmingled with any sadness."

But what are "things eternal and infinite"? I think we can answer this question. They are the absolute values, which are not diminished by sharing them, nor is one man's gain another man's loss. We are never bored when we are working for some one whom we love, or for a cause to which we have given our hearts. In so far as we love our work, we are exempt from boredom, though not from fatigue. Those who go about their work in a wrong spirit, thinking only of the wage, are sure to be bored and unhappy; and those who try, for political purposes, to foment hatred and discontent and bitterness are the worst enemies of their fellow men.

This is true; but on the other side, we have no right to employ any man in work in which he cannot take a pride. We have no right to set him to make things which would be better unmade, or to waste his time in ministering to our vanity and self-indulgence. To do so is to insult human nature in his person, and if his work bores him it is our fault, not his.

No doubt there is some work which has to be done and which is inevitably dull. Then the best remedy against boredom is St. Paul's maxim:

"Whatever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men."

There are other "eternal and infinite things," in Spinoza's sense. Nobody is bored when he is trying to make something that is beautiful, or to discover something that is true. This is what Goethe meant when he said: "He who has science and art has also religion."

But a very curious question is sometimes raised. Is it true that we should never be bored with perfection? It seems to me that the makers of Utopias almost always end with a static perfection, according to their own ideas. A perfect social order once achieved, we are to live happily ever after.

In almost every Utopia that I have read about, mankind would be hideously bored, simply because there would be no more change, no more adventure, no more chance.

The French got rid of their excellent king Louis Philippe because he bored them with his middle class virtues and his umbrella. When the good man drove off in a four-wheeler, someone called out: "Fils de Saint Louis, montez en fiacre!"

William James, after a few days at a social settlement, tells us that he said: "Pouf! How stifling! Where is the good old Devil?"

Many have thought that an eternity of bliss (especially, I should add, if accompanied by instrumental music) would be horribly boring, unless there is change and progress in Heaven, which is not the

Christian doctrine. They do not even like the idea of an unchanging God. What an occupation, they say, to play eternal games of patience by Himself!

These are deep questions. I think the difficulty comes from envisaging eternity, in which "there shall be time no longer," as mere perpetuity, a series of moments prolonged to infinity. Little as we know about Heaven, we may be sure that it is something quite different from this.

II

WOULD YOU CHOOSE LONG LIFE?

KING SOLOMON was offered one wish, which he might have spent in asking for long life. He was commended for not doing so.

He preferred to ask for wisdom, which I take to be a knowledge of the relative values of things. His wisdom was not conspicuous in his domestic arrangements, but it made a great impression on the Queen of Sheba, though Holy Writ does not mention that she bore him a son, the ancestor of Haile Selassie.

I have sometimes thought that if I were offered three wishes, which is the usual allowance in fairy stories, I should follow Solomon in asking first for wisdom, and that having acquired that I should realize that I had better not use my second and third wishes at all, since Providence knows what is best for us.

This, however, would be very dull. If I did use my second and third wishes, I should probably have asked for domestic happiness, which has come to me unasked, and success, of which I have had quite as much as I deserve.

Pessimists should take note of the fact that hardly any sane person really wishes to die, though few are much distressed when their call comes. Most

of us are much more afraid of dying than of being dead. As a Frenchman said, "Pour être mort, malheureusement il faut mourir."

We no longer believe that Methusaleh lived 969 years, beating Jared by seven. Apart from physiological objections, I cannot believe that anyone could have endured 900 years of life with a library which must have been very poorly furnished. It is most unlikely that any people in past ages lived so long on an average as white men and women do now, though the ancient Greeks, if they escaped being smothered in infancy, or being killed in a skirmish with their neighbours in the next valley, or murdered in a political purge, seem to have lived longer than any moderns before our time—much longer, strangely enough, than the Romans, whose death-rate, judging from tombs and other records, was very high.

An average life of sixty years for all children born is thought to be about the attainable limit. In a few countries women, who show their superiority by living about four years longer than men, have already reached it. New Zealand and Australia are believed to be the healthiest countries in the world. The north-western European group, with its colonies, comes next.

"What then remains but that we still should cry, Not to be born, or being born to die." We may put aside these petulant utterances, of which there are many, as expressing only moods. Poets, like other

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people, suffer from indigestion, slighted love, and impecuniousness.

The often-quoted Greek line, "Whom the gods love, die young," expresses not so much disgust with life as a sense of the pathetic beauty of a life cut off at its best and fairest, unspoilt by the sordid and cruel usage of the great world. There is a touching epitaph on a child who, "having tried the thorny path of life, shut her little eyes and saw God."

Or in the verse from the Wisdom of Solomon which I chose for the grave of my little daughter, "She being made perfect in a short time fulfilled a long time, for her soul was dear to God."

The Greek poet of love, Mimnermus, hoped to die at sixty, after which age he feared that he might not be able to enjoy his favourite pleasures. The early Greeks, who had no spectacles, ear-trumpets, or false teeth, had a horror of old age, which (this is a very Greek sentiment) puts the beautiful and the ugly on the same level.

Praises of old age are not easy to find. We all know Browning's "Rabbi ben Ezra," and I do not think that the sentiment of this poem is either unreal or unusual. I honestly think I have enjoyed the years since my retirement from active work as much or more than any other part of my life. The mere fact of having given up the worries of responsibility and the competitive life is very restful.

Lord Brougham inscribed over his villa at Cannes the lines :

I've entered port. Fortune and Hope, adieu.
Make game of others, for I've done with you.

Have the greatest men—those who have left the deepest mark on history—been long-lived? The answer is very curious.

The Founder of Christianity and Alexander the Great both died very young, at thirty-two or thirty-three. Mozart and Raphael died at thirty-six; Virgil in early middle life; Keats and Shelley lived only thirty years or less. Early middle life, as we should call it, saw the end of St. Francis and St. Thomas Aquinas, whose influence on Catholicism has been profound and lasting.

The age of fifty-two was fatal to two of the greatest men who ever lived, in widely different fields—Shakespeare and Napoleon. Some would add a third—the sinister figure of Lenin. Caesar was only a little older when he was murdered.

But the old men can make a good show. Among poets, there are the three great tragedians of Greece, and Goethe. Wordsworth lived to be eighty, but as a great poet he died long before his death.

Some great men have old heads on young shoulders, like Alexander and Napoleon. They do wonderful things, but they wear themselves out prematurely. Others have young heads on old shoulders—they keep their freshness long after most

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men have lost it. But the permanently valuable contributions of men over seventy make a very meagre crop.

We must all wish not to lag superfluous on the stage. Samuel Johnson, copying Juvenal, expresses this tragedy with pathetic force:

From Marlborough's eyes the tears of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driveller and a show.

It is kinder to draw a veil over these cruelties of Nature. They are not really so sad as the premature extinction of such a genius as that of Keats, and of several victims of the Great War, whose death deprived us of more than we shall ever know.

III

THIS AGE OF SLOGANS

THAT extraordinary man Sir Rabindranath Tagore, who looks like an Old Testament prophet, writes like a mystic of the cloister, and is really the successful head of a college, visited the United States some years ago. He observed, with interest untinged by admiration, the machinery of democracy in God's own country.

Democracy, he wrote, "makes a deliberate study of the laws of the dark patches in the human intellect, wherewith to help itself to create an atmosphere of delusion, through hints, gestures, yells, and startling grimaces, for the purpose of stupefying the popular mind.

"When I was in Chicago, I saw everywhere on the town walls one single name blazoned in big letters in an endless round of repetition, like the whirlwind monotony of a dervish dance that dazes one's mind into vacuity. Evidently the name belonged to some candidate for political election. But what an insult to the people, who are supposed to represent the supreme power in their government, openly to apply to them the spell of hypnotism in place of reason, as the medicine man does in the heart of Africa!"

Man is a combative animal, and if he has nothing reasonable to fight about, such as religion, money, or a woman, he will fight about nothing. He will fight

about a coloured rag, like a bull, or about a name, or about a catchword which he does not understand.

No foreigner understands the difference in the United States between a Republican and a Democrat, but the citizens of the great Republic will shout for much more than two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," Diana being one party or the other, it does not matter which.

Bimetallism is not a subject which normally moves the passions; but thousands of Americans sobbed with emotion when they were exhorted "not to crucify humanity on a cross of gold." We have had equally idiotic catchwords, such as "Force is no remedy"; "Trust the people"; "The flowing tide."

Readers of Gibbon will remember how in the reign of Justinian the capital was convulsed by the struggles of the Blues and the Greens, till the streets of Constantinople ran with blood.

The theological controversy between Athanasians and Arians was no doubt important, though abstruse; but we cannot suppose that the mobs who paraded Constantinople yelling, "Aron Areion," "Take away Arius," appreciated the significance of a vowel in the Creed. Poor Arius was "taken away" with rather suspicious suddenness.

In my young days the word "slogan" was not in use, and the thing was less in evidence than it is now. In those days people at least pretended to be rational, and the scientific rationalists, healthy-minded men who found their own lives interesting enough, did not realize that their chilling materialism

was depriving life of its colour and interest for ordinary people.

If all the higher values are only a luminous haze floating over a drab reality, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

Then came the war, and a revolt against the intellect, and the various youth movements. Youth could not do without something to shout for, to work for, even to die for.

Are the old miracles discredited? Mrs. Eddy will provide new ones. Are the clergy dumb dogs who cannot bark? Frank Buchman will bark loud enough. Is classical art conventional? We will have painters who cannot draw, and poets who cannot scan.

On a large scale, there are two slogans which have had a grand innings. For we need two slogans—one to invoke in our devotions, the other to throw at the heads of our neighbours.

These two are Bolshevism and Fascism. The former, which for some ten years after 1917 made every Conservative foam at the mouth, has gone out of fashion since the real Bolsheviks are in their graves with Stalin's bullets in their skulls.

"Communism" is not quite so effective, since there is no longer any Communism in Russia. Russia, in fact, is the one country in which Communism is not a menace; it is like typhus; you cannot have it twice. The Russians have had it, and the survivors are recovering.

The other swear-word—Fascism—is still in full cry. It has almost supplanted "Capitalism" (if you

are a Socialist you must put the stress on the second syllable—it sounds wickeder) as the word which makes the Reds see redder. But they do not seem to know what they mean by it.

If we ask them what are the differences between dictatorships in Germany or Italy and in Russia, their answers are very wide of the mark. They will say that Russia is democratic, which is enough to make Lenin turn in his tomb, or that the other two are not Socialistic, which is equally untrue.

But there is nothing unusual about this. Furious antagonisms are generally between parties which do not differ much.

Are these battles between Tweedledum and Tweedledee merely foolish, or is there anything to be said for them? The instinct to take sides and to choose a hero or leader lies so deep in human nature that it will never be eradicated. Paul and Apollos may be the best of friends, but their flock will divide themselves into partisans of one or the other.

Possibly almost any kind of loyalty is better than selfishness or cynical indifference. We owe something to unbalanced people who take up causes and repeat slogans in season and out of season. They sometimes get things done. And yet I think our last reflection must be that of the Swedish statesman Oxenstierna. "Do you not see, my son, with how little wisdom the world is governed?"

The symbolic bird of our race is not the eagle but the parrot.

IV

NOTHING FAILS LIKE SUCCESS

THE usual version is that nothing succeeds like success. The American murmurs to himself: "Health! Energy! Success!" every morning while he swings his physical exerciser. But in the long run my version is nearer the truth.

I may be answered: "I don't care about the long run; after me the deluge." But ambition often fails in the short run; "He gave them their desire, and sent leanness withal into their souls."

But I am not sermonizing to-day. I have been reading Arnold Toynbee's *A Study of History*, in three fat volumes. His master-key to the study of history is what he calls the law of challenge and response. Whenever a nation or a class has won for itself a comfortable position, afraid of no enemies, it goes to pieces. For our species will always be lazy if possible.

Examples, it seems, may be found everywhere, and at all times. Nations which have done anything great in the world have lived in countries which no sensible man would choose.

The Hebrews exchanged the desert for the forbidding tableland of Judaea; the Athenians lived in the barren peninsula of Attica; the Persians among oases in another parched desert; the

Egyptians and Babylonians in jungle-swamps which they tamed with infinite labour; the Chinese fight an unending battle with their demon-river, the Hoang-ho, and so on.

Rome, France, England, and Germany were hardened by conflicts with dangerous neighbours. But what parts of those countries have shaped their destinies? The rugged north of England, not the south; the sandy plains of Prussia, not the smiling and fertile provinces of the west; and in America the hard and grim New England, not the soft and luxuriant Southern States, which until the Civil War looked down upon "our cousins the Yankees" with pity and disdain.

Success may ruin a once hardy and forceful nation. The Romans of the city of Rome became at last a parasitic rabble living on *panem et circenses*, on doles and dog-races, we may say. When the goose that laid the golden eggs was dead, there was an end of them. Ruling races rule themselves out; to this law there have been few exceptions.

Is it or is it not a law of nature that a nation which has established a high standard of living, with short hours and high wages, must inevitably go down before some more backward race, as we call it, where men are content to give better value for a day's work? Machinery, which is in the hands of the progressive nations, may put off this result for a time; and the cheap workers may be kept out by force, for a time; but sooner or later

they will force their way in, and then what will happen?

Immigration from the more backward into the more successful country proceeds as surely as water finds its own level, unless entry is barred. The Poles before the war poured into Germany; Italians in large numbers have settled in the South of France; the Irish are swarming into England and Scotland. The Chinese have almost annexed Singapore, and East Indians are at home in Trinidad and Natal.

We drove the French armies out of North America in the middle of the eighteenth century, and our colonists, free from danger, soon took the opportunity to revolt. "Now I am going to avenge my country," said Lafayette; and he helped the voracious George Washington, who said that he had once thrown a dollar across the Potomac, to throw a sovereign across the Atlantic. Money went further in those days!

But Lafayette might have rejoiced in a fuller revenge if he could have lived to see it. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the French in Canada were a mere handful. Now they are pushing us out of Eastern Canada and swarming over into Maine and Massachusetts.

When Arnold Toynbee visited New England, once the home of the indomitable pioneers who founded the fortune of the United States, he found not only derelict farms but deserted villages. The attraction of the West and a very low birth-rate

among what has now become an aristocracy is depleting the rural parts of these States.

When I was in America the clergyman of an old New England township told me that he hardly ever had a baptism among his flock.

But Toynbee found one back-country township full of life. There was a fête, and half the population was wearing the badge of a French-Canadian club. The French are spreading from the towns to the country, where as farmers their frugal habits soon enable them to buy their farms.

New Haven, a typical New England town, was nearly half Italian when I was in America. I do not know what has happened since the quotas were introduced. But are not the quotas a confession of weakness?

My next example (not from Toynbee's book) will, I think, surprise most of my readers. It is well known that the rapid fall in the birth-rate, which causes some of our publicists such concern, is not confined to the thickly-populated European countries, but is almost equally prominent in North America, Australia, and New Zealand, which are very far from being full.

When New Zealand was first settled by the English, the Maori population was roughly estimated at nearly 100,000. Beaten in war, the natives lost heart, and thought themselves doomed. They said, "As the Pakeha rat has destroyed the Maori rat, and as the Pakeha grass has destroyed the

Maori fern, so will the Pakeha destroy the Maori." The Maori population dwindled rapidly to about 40,000.

Then, about the turn of the century, they pulled themselves together, with the startling results revealed in the last census. From 1932 to 1936 the Maori birth-rate was 41.6 per thousand, the death-rate was 18, and the excess of births over deaths 23.6 per thousand. The corresponding figures for the European population were 16.6, 8.3, and 8.3. (The figure 8.3 for the deaths is amazing; it is the lowest in the world.)

If this state of things goes on, in two hundred years New Zealand will be half Polynesian!

In speaking of Canada, Siegfried sums up: "The vitality of the French Canadians is due to an attitude towards life and work which is found nowhere else in America. It believes in hard work, thrift, and self-discipline, and restricts ambition to reasonable proportions. Such thoughtful asceticism is the very negation of Americanism."

"Faith, Hope, Love, and Work." Lord Baldwin sent a thrill through the House of Commons when he said that these four monosyllables are enough for Englishmen. On the other hand, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

THE PENITENTS' BENCH

A LEADING article in *The Times* suggests that the surprising confessions of Stalin's latest batch of victims at Moscow were the result of "morbid penitence." Radek and his companions, according to this view, were conscience-stricken at having fallen short of absolute devotion and loyalty to the Marxist creed, and were moved to abase themselves by making a full confession of their guilt before undergoing their sentence.

This seems to me most unlikely. The accused were the surviving members of Lenin's Old Guard, the first apostles of Bolshevism. The revolution of 1917 has followed the precedent of the revolution of 1789; it has devoured its own children.

Uritsky was assassinated. Lenin himself was shot through the lungs and in the neck; he made a marvellous but not complete recovery. Dzerzhinsky was poisoned—it is not certain by whom.

I made notes of a conversation with a Russian friend in January 1927. "Dzerzhinsky was a sadist monster, probably half mad, a Georgian by birth, who was converted to Romanism when he lived in Poland. He remained to the end a practising Catholic, and had a chapel secretly attached to his quarters. Once, after superintending the massacre

of 1,200 people on one morning, he repaired to his devotions. There was an understanding between him and the Roman Catholic Church, for he would not allow Catholics to suffer in his hecatombs. He saw a priest on his deathbed."

Kiroff was assassinated. Of the others, Tomsy committed suicide when he knew that Stalin meant to kill him; Zinovieff, Kameneff, and others have been put to death by Stalin; Bukharin has shared their fate; Radek and Sokolnikoff are in gaol, Krassin and Chicherin have died from natural causes. Only Trotsky remains, a fugitive in Mexico.

Why, then, did these men confess? Simply because they knew that their fate was decided before the trial, and they wished to be put out of their misery after months of moral and perhaps physical torture. They had been pertinaciously cross-examined in prison, and very possibly subjected to the Bolshevist tortures—deprivation of water and of sleep. The strongest resolution will give way under the prolonged agony of thirst and sleeplessness. The old tortures—the Roman *eculeus*, *fidiculae*, *pix*, *lammina*, *flagellum*; the French *brodequin*, *estrapade*, *chevalet*; the Scottish *cachelaws*, rack, and boot; the *cordelas* and *strappado* of the Inquisition—have all been defied, sometimes with the help of charms, of which the words, "Jesus autem transiens" were the most potent; but against thirst and sleeplessness there is no remedy.

We need not feel any pity for the victims, who

only reap what they have sown. The four beautiful daughters of the Tsar and their invalid brother rise in judgment against them. The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small.

The suggestion in *The Times* as to a possible motive for these confessions, though unacceptable in this case, is interesting on other grounds. It is a very old idea that a worshipper, if he wishes his sins to be forgiven, must abase himself publicly and declare that he fully admits his guilt.

Even now in our courts a prisoner who pleads guilty is often punished more lightly than if he had pleaded not guilty. In former times, if the prisoner refused to plead either guilty or not guilty, it was very embarrassing, for the trial could not proceed. Accordingly, long after judicial torture was abolished, the prisoner who refused to plead was subjected to the *peine forte et dure*—he was pressed to death. Some prisoners endured this torture in order to save their property, which would have been confiscated as the result of conviction.

Solemn acts of worship have usually begun with public and general confession, a practice which may have been borrowed from the Jews. There exists, however, an Assyrian tablet in which Assurbanipal makes his confession.

To whom ought individual confession to be made? In the early Church a public confession before the congregation was the custom. This was gradually discontinued, and the rule was established that all

serious offences must be confessed to a priest, who prescribes a penance and finally pronounces absolution.

In times when discipline was severe the penance was often exceedingly drastic, and there was no secrecy about it. At the same time, the priest is forbidden, under heavy penalties, to divulge anything that he has heard in confession.

In Protestant Churches, it is considered sufficient to confess privately to God, unless the penitent is troubled in conscience, or unless apology and reparation are due to a neighbour. To this it is sometimes objected that it is easy to confess to God, because we are quite sure that He will not repeat what we tell Him!

In our time, in certain sects, public acknowledgment of faults before the congregation has been revived. There may be a penitents' bench, to occupy which is a public declaration that this brother has resolved to give up his former sins and to lead a new life.

There is something abhorrent to the ordinary Englishman in the idea of laying his soul bare to any fellow mortal. Even confession to a priest he feels to be lowering to his dignity, unless he is anxious about his spiritual condition, in which case he may consult a clergyman just as he consults a doctor.

This being so, it is not a little surprising that the new Group Movement (which has nothing to do

with Oxford) should encourage this kind of public self-exhibition, and yet should be so popular among our young people.

It is essentially an American mission, like Christian Science, Moody and Sankey, and other less successful transatlantic efforts at propagandism. Possibly it indicates a partial breakdown of reserve among the younger generation; I do not think it would have taken root fifty years ago, at least at our universities.

I cannot think that the practice is to be commended. There is a sort of indecency in taking the public into confidence about our private difficulties, and the heart of man is very deceitful, when it appeals to others for sympathy. But I have never been present at one of these meetings for "sharing" experiences, so perhaps I ought not to give an opinion.

The question whether ecclesiastical penitential discipline should be revived cannot be raised at the end of an article. An attempt to do so in the National Church would be resented and even ridiculed; but there ought to be some effective power of refusing the privileges of Church membership to "notorious evil livers"—that is to say, to those who have either confessed to a serious breach of the Christian moral code, or have been convicted of it by the law of the land.

VI

INVECTIVE AND ABUSE

AT last, it seems, a move is being made to remedy the scandals of the English law of libel. Damages—if a Bill now before Parliament goes through—are to be assessed in most cases by the injury actually suffered. At present, an action for libel against a newspaper, a company, or a rich man, is a promising speculation, because it appeals to the passion for vicarious generosity which is such a feature of our time. The evil is not confined to libel actions; it affects all claims for damages, which are frequently assessed in a ridiculous manner.

But there is one country where, we are told, a very drastic remedy is to be applied. Dr. Goebbels is reported to have forbidden all criticisms of any kind. The German is not allowed to say that a book or a play or a picture is good or bad; he must confine himself to bare description. The German is to live in a world of facts without values.

It is rather difficult to believe, though the Nazi steam-roller spares nobody. The effects on the intellectual life of Germany are tragic. In the country of Kant and Goethe the human spirit is bound, gagged, and half strangled.

I have been reading Kingsmill's little books on "Invective and Abuse." The gentle art of making

enemies, cursing enemies, and bludgeoning enemies, is a very old one. The 109th Psalm is a long-drawn Oriental curse, which has an odd appearance in a Christian Bible. Plato says that the philosopher cuts a poor figure in controversy because he knows no evil to say about anybody. Demosthenes and Cicero were never at a loss; their opponents emerged without a rag of character.

Ecclesiastics leave the laity far behind when it comes to cursing. The form of excommunication pronounced by the Jewish Church upon the philosopher Spinoza leaves nothing unsaid. And the Orthodox Eastern Church did not do badly in 1916.

"Wherefore against the traitor Venizelos we have invoked the following injuries: The ulcers of Job, the whale of Jonah, the leprosy of Naaman, the bite of death, the shuddering of the dying, the thunderbolt of hell, and the malediction of God and man. And we call for the same injuries on those who at the forthcoming elections shall vote for Venizelos, and further pray for their herds to wither, and for them to become deaf and blind. Amen."

This gem is from my own collection. Mr. Kingsmill gives a manifesto by the Anabaptists, in which Oliver Cromwell is described as "that grand impostor, that loathsome hypocrite, that detestable traitor, that prodigy of nature, that opprobrium of

mankind, that landscape of iniquity, that sink of sin, and that compendium of baseness, who now calls himself our Protector." This beats anything that the Independent Labour Party have said about Ramsay MacDonald.

The Duke of Wellington's judgments, as might be expected, were in tabloid form. "The worst speech I ever heard? One by a Portuguese general before going into action, beginning, Men, remember that you are Portuguese." On a draft of officers sent out to him: "I don't know what effect these officers will have on the enemy; but by God they frighten me."

Prynne's diatribe against shingling would have been very much to the point ten years ago. "Our English gentlewomen are now grown so far past shame, modesty, grace and nature, as to clip their hair like men, and to make this whorish cut the very guise and fashion of their times, to the eternal infamy of their sex, their nation, and the great scandal of religion." Archbishop Laud cut off Prynne's ears; the ladies may ask why he did not cut off his tongue.

Political abuse is usually too savage to be amusing, and I think English invective is generally rather barbarous as compared with French. The French use the rapier; we prefer the bludgeon. They excel in repartee. A Frenchman must have felt that he had done something to avenge Sedan when "Bill" Bismarck, after a gross act of rudeness, gave his

name. "Cela explique, mais n'excuse pas," said the Frenchman.

The most amusing abusive speech, I think, was when O'Connell declared that Disraeli "possesses just the qualities of the impenitent thief who died upon the Cross, whose name, I verily believe, must have been Disraeli. For aught I know, the present Disraeli is descended from him, and with the impression that he is, I now forgive the heir-at-law of the blasphemous thief who died upon the Cross."

Some of the most stinging lampoons have been in the form of epitaphs, like the famous lines on Frederick, Prince of Wales, beginning, "Here lies poor Fred, who was alive and is dead," or the less well-known epigram with the same motive:

Here lies Sir John Guise,
Nobody laughs and nobody cries.
Where he is gone and how he fares
Nobody knows and nobody cares.

Poor Sir John was like the King of Judah, who "departed without being desired."

But I am specially interested in the ferocious attacks of men of letters on each other. Like all authors, I have had my share of abuse; and the example of great writers shows what a mistake it is to retaliate.

Browning's attack on Fitzgerald (who was dead), and Tennyson's furious lines, in *Punch*, about Bulwer Lytton, who had called him "school-miss Alfred,"

were probably regretted by their authors, and certainly did not add to their reputation. I have a list of my enemies, but I have never used it. Most of them are dead, and the rest will soon have outlived me.

But how brutal, and how stupid, most of these attacks are—by great men upon other great men! Carlyle, possibly primed by that sharp-tongued lady, Jane Welsh, is perhaps the worst. Houghton's *Life of Keats* is "an attempt to make us eat dead dog by exquisite currying and cooking." John Keble is "a little ape." Wordsworth is "a small, genuine man." "A more pitiful, rickety, grasping, staggering, stammering Tomfool than Charles Lamb I do not know." "Poor England, when such a despicable abortion is named genius." Coleridge is "a weak, diffusive, weltering, ineffectual man." Macaulay "is but a poor creature with his dictionary literature and erudition, his saloon arrogance." Shelley is "a poor creature, who has said or done nothing worthy of a serious man being at the trouble of remembering." Gladstone is "one of the contemptiblest men I ever looked on. A poor ritualist; almost spectral kind of phantasm of a man."

All this shows only that Carlyle's stomach was out of order. The temper of criticism should be one of appreciation. If a book is bad, we need not read it, still less review it. There are exceptions, no doubt. Humbugs ought to be exposed, like poor Robert Montgomery, who was slaughtered by

Macaulay in a way which has made many generations of schoolboys shout with laughter. But when the poor poet begged to be taken out of the pillory, Macaulay ought to have consented not to reprint the essay.

And when Bernard Shaw writes: "With the single exception of Homer, there is no eminent writer, not even Sir Walter Scott, whom I despise so entirely as I despise Shakespeare when I measure my mind against his," we remember that he is an Irishman, and that he would never speak so unkindly of a living author.

To pelt a statue on a high pedestal is good fun. H. G. Wells enjoys the same game with Julius Caesar and Napoleon Bonaparte. And it is really a good thing that we should not be ashamed to say what we think about great reputations. Idolatry makes bad history and bad criticism.

Perhaps indeed we are too gentle now. When I think of certain tendencies in modern literature, art and politics, I should not be sorry to bring back one of these old fellows, and see him lay about him with his tomahawk.

